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Women and children freed by Hutus

## Bandits seize Britons on gorilla safari

BY SUSAN BELL, ROBIN LODGE AND STEPHEN FARRELL

UP TO 14 tourists, including five Britons, were kidnapped by Hutu rebels as they slept at a gorilla reserve camp site in Uganda yesterday. Their attackers, who were armed with spears, guns and machetes, also killed a game warden and set cars and tents alight before fleeing into the forest.

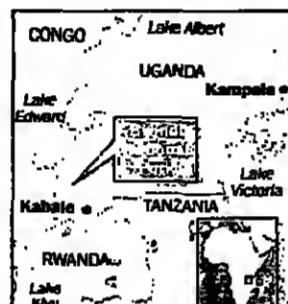
The bandits — thought to have been members of the notorious death squads responsible for the massacre of half a million people in Rwanda five years ago — are believed to have taken 27 people from the camp in the remote Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, but they later let all the women and children go.

It was not clear last night how many were still being held captive, but Michael Cook, the British High Commissioner in Kampala, said that he had received reports that as many as five Britons could be among the hostages, along with several Ugandans, three Americans, three New Zealanders, a Swiss and an Australian. He said: "There is obviously anxiety because of the reputation of the group that has taken them, and the inaccessibility of the area."

The raiders were reported to be heading for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, having released up to 15 people who were described as safe, but "in a terrible state after their ordeal". They were returning to Kampala last night.

René Roudaut, the French ambassador in Kampala, said that about 150 heavily-armed bandits had surprised the holidaymakers as they slept at the Buhoma camping site on the northern edge of the park. As dawn broke, the tourists were rounded up at gunpoint and stripped of their valuables while the raiders set fire to vehicles and tents.

Some French-speakers tried



firmation of the nationalities or numbers involved, but we certainly believe that British people are involved, both in the kidnapped group and the group which escaped.

"We are pretty certain that there was a local guide killed, but none of the tourists. We are making arrangements for those who escaped to be flown back to Kampala."

The Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, created in 1991, covers 331 sq km of rainforest on the edge of the western Rift Valley, south of Lake Edward.

It is home to more than 300 mountain gorillas, divided into a dozen groups — more than half of the world's wild mountain gorilla population — and is also famous for nearly 350 species of bird.

The park, whose name means place of darkness, has two tourist camps a few hundred yards apart. One is owned by African Pearl Safaris, and a night there costs between £30 and £65 dollars; the other is Abercrombie and Kent's Buhoma Gorilla Camp, with self-contained standing tents, which cost upwards of £100 a night.

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## Strange question of silage provides fodder for thought

WHAT on earth was Derek Wyatt (Lab) talking about? Would the minister for tourism, Mr Wyatt asked yesterday, after "the way silage is coloured on our motorways"? The inquiry was met by a bemused rumble from MPs.

But Wyatt's indignation was not spent. "It is dirty brown. It does not give an appropriate image of new Labour," he said.

Snatching Sittingbourne and Sheppey from the Tories in 1997, Wyatt was the thirteenth least likely new Labour MP. Now he was asking un-

likely questions. Is our motorway system disfigured by split silage? Isn't silage dirty green? Can the Government change its colour?

Bald, hulking and amiable, Wyatt looks like a baby giant, tumbled too early from the nest. Roth's *Parliamentary Profiles* calls him "relaxed about clothes and appearance". "I'm not a suit man. I have only one," a former Oxford Rugby blue, Wyatt may have sustained one blow too many to the head, on yesterday's showing.

I certainly heard "silage".

Collective head-scratching on all sides suggested that MPs heard the same. As, surely, did the minister, Janet Anderson, stammered that her honourable friend raised "as ever" - the most interesting questions.

But my *Guardian* colleague thinks he heard "signage", meaning "signs": which would have made sense if it were a word. Apparently it does feature in local government dictionaries, after "new-build" and before "social mix" and "total spend". We must

give Wyatt the benefit of the doubt: he may be less interesting than he seemed. New Labour backbenchers are not supposed to be interesting.

Which is why Gwyneth Dunwoody (Lab, Crewe and Nantwich) comes as such a relief. The veteran "old" Labour rightwinger arrived yesterday arrayed in a new garment. A vast purple wrap, hundreds of

square yards of it, covered this substantial lady. She described the "enormous opportunities" presented by the Millennium Dome: "a great public space," she said. Ah, Gwyneth, how true but not our greatest public space! It lends a whole new meaning to the right to roam.

And a new fascination to the concept of women's rugby,

heavily plugged yesterday by the Sports Minister, Tony Banks.

For Monday mornings, Mr Banks chooses a wicked little black suit, three-piece, which he wears with a pucker face and sourly deadpan expression. A series of "nothing much", Mr Banks offered his congratulations "to the England women's rugby team, on their victory over Scotland". Mr Banks's felicitations will raise a cheer in the ladies' shower room.

"I was there," he declared grimly. "And it was in fact

very, very enjoyable rugby and I'd encourage people to go to women's rugby." Sadly, Mrs Dunwoody looked unconvinced.

Claire Ward seemed more game. The Labour MP for Watford was keen that Banks should promote after-school clubs. Banks said he had been impressed by these on a recent visit to Watford, a constituency foolish enough to re-elect him as Labour candidate in 1997.

Ms Ward, he mused, would have been seven. "Too young to vote - and too old to kiss."

Ward looked flustered by the thought.

Unflustered and benign throughout was a minister this Sketch had scarcely noticed, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the House, Paddy Tipping. An unpaid appointment, he is so unimportant that new Labour's style police have not even bothered to remove his beard.

But can he make it with that name? Paddy Tipping sounds like an alternative Saturday night sport for canal-side skinheads bored with queer-bashing.

## Rugged area is a haven for genocidal rebels

ONE OF the travel agencies whose tourists were attacked last night accused the Foreign Office of issuing unclear guidance, despite official warnings two weeks ago that rebel attacks and road ambushes in Uganda's northern and western districts had intensified.

The advice, issued 11 days ago, said that rebels were "periodically active" on the borders of Uganda, Congo and Rwanda, and warned "although the situation is currently peaceful, it can change quickly".

It also warned that operations by a separate rebel group infiltrating from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the Rwenzori Mountains area in the west of the country were continuing at a reduced level and that the areas of the Rwenzori Mountains, Bundibugyo and Kasese "should be avoided if possible".

However Sue Ockwell, a spokeswoman for Acacia Expeditions, complained that the advice was sometimes worded in such a way that it contained clues which had to be deciphered.

"If they mean 'Don't go', they should say 'Don't go', it is a bit like estate agent-speak," she said. " -

She claimed the issue had been discussed at a meeting with the Foreign Office this

Tour groups demand clearer official advice, report Michael Binyon and Stephen Farrell

ter Baroness Symons a week ago. "We were told by her that there are only three and a half people manning the travel advice section. We get hundreds and hundreds of pages. It is very difficult to imagine how they can manage to handle it with such limited resources."

Yesterday the Foreign Office advice was swiftly updated: all tourists were warned not to go to the northern and western areas at all.

Visitors were strongly advised to avoid the Gulu, Kitgum and West Nile districts unless they were on urgent business, in which case they should seek local information and proceed with caution.

The kidnappings quickly stirred alarm among those familiar with the inaccessible mountainous area. It has long been the refuge of criminals, wanted men, rebel groups and, more recently, the extrem-

ist perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide killings who are determined to return to power. Some of the bloodiest and most desperate wanted men are thought to have established their bases in the area.

The main rebel group in the area is the Allied Democratic Forces, a loose alliance of former Interahamwe Hutus, responsible for the death of as many as one million Tutsis in the Rwandan genocide. They are allied with Ugandan rebels opposed to the Kampala government, supporters of former President Mobutu in Zaire and local bandits.

Numbering up to 3,000 men scattered in the mountains, they are strong enough to take on the Ugandan Army, and last year overwhelmed and briefly occupied Kasese, the main town at the foot of the mountains. They are well armed, receiving supplies from Sudan and from President Kabila's government in Congo, which is fighting rebels backed by Kampala.

Control Risks, London-based business risk advisers, said that the Ugandan Army

tries to deter any tourists going to the mountains, the principal habitat of gorillas. Those that defy the warnings set up camps that are guarded only by local warders, who could keep off poachers but would



Dian Fossey, who spent much of her life studying gorillas in Rwanda, was believed to have been killed by poachers

### GORILLAS ARE MAIN ATTRACTION FOR UGANDA TOURISTS

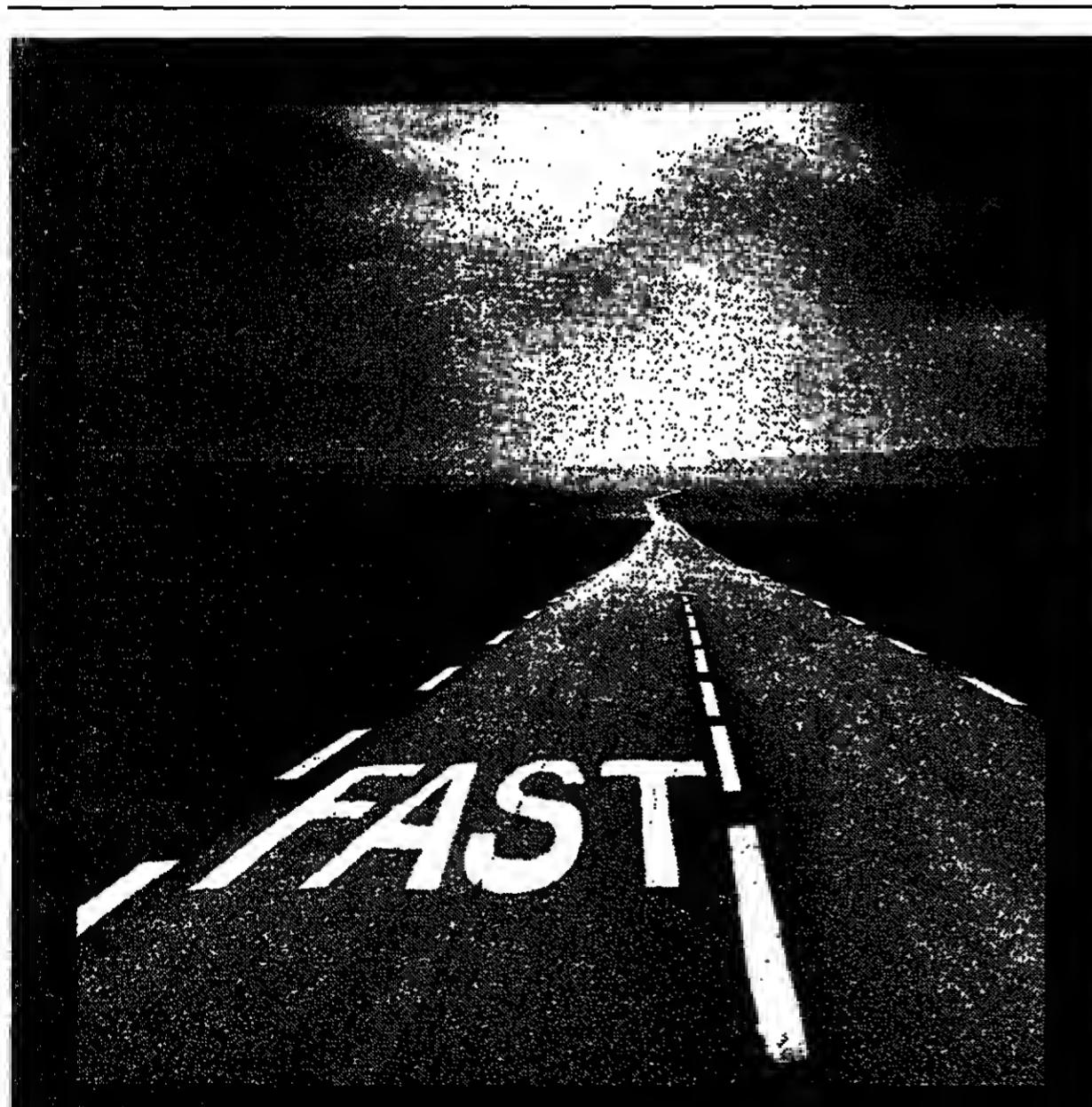
EVER since an unruly three-year-old gorilla called Pablo became a television star by sitting on David Attenborough in the late 1970s, thousands of tourists have made the journey to meet its relatives (Adam Sherwin writes). With the closure of the parks in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo because of civil war, Uganda is the only country where tourists can find the elusive beasts.

Only 350 mountain gorillas are known to remain in Uganda's Impenetrable Forest and irresponsible tourists, desperate for a glimpse, are causing more damage to the subspecies than poaching or civil war. The number of official visiting permits has

dropped from 50 to 10, leading to a black market in tickets.

People paying £680 for the flight to Entebbe will often bribe the wardens' permits that normally cost £150 per visit have changed hands for £4,000.

Tourists head for Bwindi, in the remote southwest corner of Uganda, near the border with the Congo and Rwanda, home to the majority of the animals. Another 100 live 50 miles away in the Virungas, a chain of mainly extinct volcanoes on the Congo and Rwanda border where Dian Fossey, of *Gorillas in the Mist* fame, lived and worked for 13 years until she was killed, probably by poachers, in 1985.



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## Older teachers 'too expensive'

By JOHN O'LEARY  
EDUCATION EDITOR

MIDDLE-AGED teachers are being frozen out of the job market as schools opt for newly qualified staff to help balance their budgets, new figures have shown.

More than 8,000 people were seeking teaching jobs in mainstream schools while claiming state benefits last month even though there were up to 3,000 vacancies in England and Wales. Up to half of them were in their forties and fifties.

The number of teaching vacancies has been rising steadily throughout the 1990s, although last year's total of 2,521 still rep-

resented less than 0.7 per cent of the full complement in state schools. Secondary schools struggled to find suitable candidates in foreign languages, mathematics and some science subjects.

However, new statistics from the Employment Service show that more than 16,000 teachers are seeking work in primary or secondary schools. Although some are newly qualified graduates, fewer than 4,000 are in their twenties.

The largest group, at more than 4,600, are in their fifties. Most are thought to have taken early retirement and are hoping to supplement their income through temporary teaching work. Their lengthy

service makes them expensive to employ permanently. Difficulties experienced by older applicants has led to the formation of the Association of Teachers Against Ageism. Harry Harris, its treasurer, said: "This is not just a problem in teaching, but it is particularly serious in schools."

Stephen Hillier, the Teacher Training Agency's head of communications, said the age profile of those seeking jobs in schools followed that of the teaching profession as a whole. "It may be that many of these people are in the wrong place or have the wrong qualifications."

Leading article, page 23

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Sewage action demand

The Government yesterday told the water industry to clean up sewage while cutting bills by 10 per cent. Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, claimed the combination was achievable but Water UK, the industry's trade association, said there was a £2 billion shortfall between what water companies believed the programme would cost, and figures produced by Ofwat and the Environmental Agency. Mr Meacher said that in future all coastal discharges serving populations of 2,000 or more must receive at least secondary treatment.

#### Car sales 25% down

Figures to be published this week are expected to show a fall of more than 25 per cent in new car registrations in January and February. Car manufacturers, braced for an 8 per cent fall in sales over the year, are hoping for high March sales after yesterday's launch of six-monthly registrations. Although private orders are low for T-reg plates, fleet sales are expected to be good.

#### Obsessed secretary guilty

Gillian Hartshore, 50, the secretary of Professor David Carter of Liverpool University, a leading criminal psychologist, was found guilty of harassment causing fear of violence against him. Hartshore, who became obsessed that he was having an affair with a student and bombarded him with more than 500 abusive telephone calls, will be sentenced on March 15.

#### McDonald 'improving'

The Channel 4 presenter Sheena McDonald, who suffered serious head injuries when she was hit by a speeding police van, showed signs of a slight improvement. She is still in intensive care at University College Hospital, Central London, but is now able to breathe without a ventilator and her condition remains stable. She was hurt in an accident on Friday night in Islington.

#### Porn teacher jailed

A public school teacher and former lay clerk at Ely Cathedral who downloaded child pornography from the Internet onto his home computer was jailed for four months. Jonathon Bowden, 30, who taught music at The King's School, Ely, admitted 21 charges at Chelmsford Crown Court, Essex. The offences came to light when Bowden took his computer for repairs.

## Scots told to keep nuclear deterrent

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR

A NUCLEAR-FREE independent Scotland would dangerously weaken Britain's nuclear deterrent, the Defence Secretary said yesterday.

George Robertson, who in his youth campaigned against the deployment of American ballistic missile submarines at Holy Loch, told a Scottish audience that the Royal Navy's Trident submarines must remain at Faslane because the base on the Clyde had long played an important part in Britain's defence.

Delivering his first major speech on nuclear policy at Aberdeen University, Mr Robertson warned the Scottish Nationalist Party: "Those who would take Scotland out of the United Kingdom need to address the implications of separation for the rest of the country."

The nationalists, he said, were committed to closing all nuclear installations on Scot-

tish soil and prohibiting all nuclear-powered submarines from Scottish waters.

The clear implication, he said, was that the Faslane base would have to be moved south.

"What would happen to those jobs linked to the nuclear facilities at Faslane? What would be the timescale for withdrawal?" he asked.

Mr Robertson also asked whether the SNP had bothered to think about the years of "fraught" negotiations between Russia and Ukraine to divide the Black Sea Fleet, following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"Would a separate Scottish state compensate the rest of the United Kingdom for any costs that arose?" he asked.

Mr Robertson also called on Scottish nationalists to consider the cost of setting up a separate Scottish Army, Navy and Air Force.

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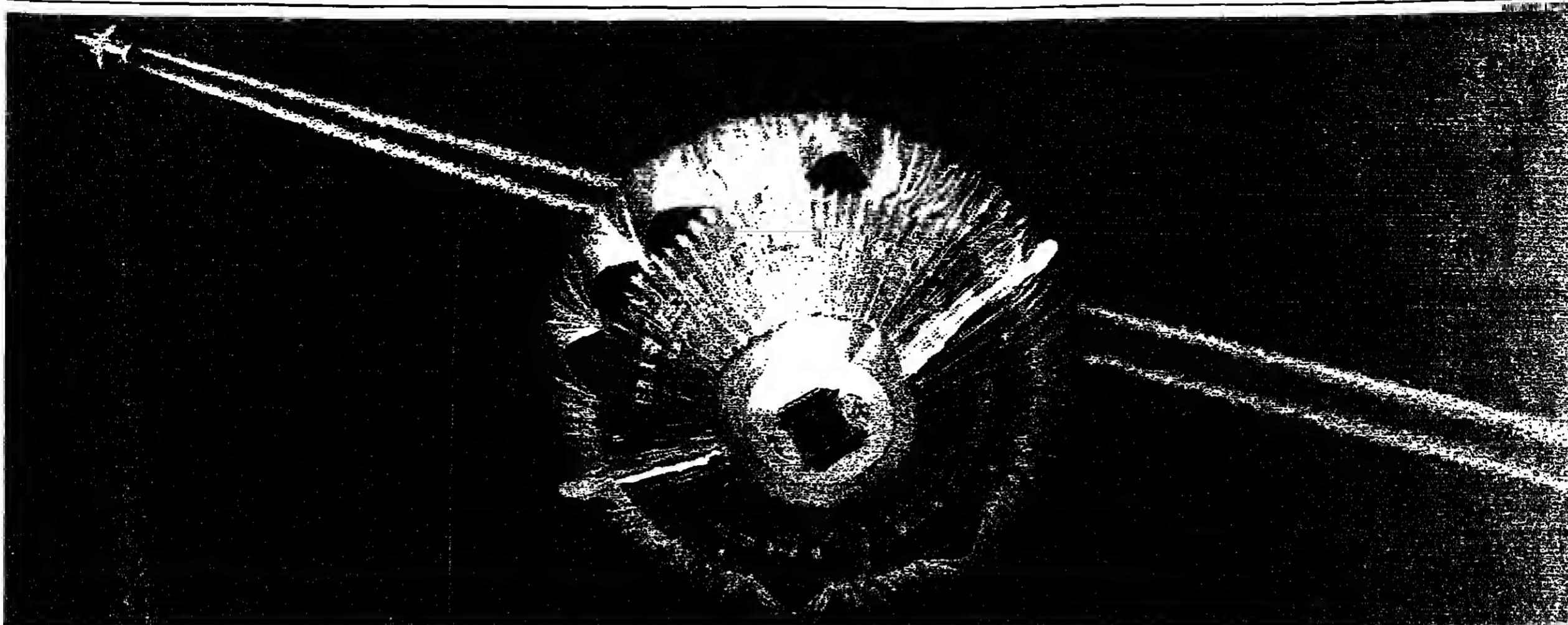
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After several bumpy false starts, the Breitling Orbiter 3 balloon takes to the skies in the Swiss Alps yesterday, starting a race to the finish with the Cable & Wireless craft which is currently attempting to manoeuvre around China

## Global balloon race finally takes off

FROM HELEN RUMBLEY IN CHATEAU D'OEIX

THE challenge to be the first team to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon became a true race yesterday with the launch of Breitling Orbiter 3 in the Swiss Alps.

Andy Elson was hanging outside his Cable & Wireless balloon over the Bay of Bengal yesterday morning when his co-pilot told him that their rivals were airborne.

Although it is 0.000 miles behind, the Breitling Orbiter is smaller, lighter and will go faster - a lean hare to the Cable and Wireless tortoise.

The news only added to Mr Elson's frustration at being forced to take the slow route around China. As they are a British team the Chinese have banned them from retributing for Richard Branson's trespassing balloon flight at Christ-

mas. Although the Cable & Wireless craft has broken the world endurance record of 10 days and will by tomorrow have spent a fortnight in the air, now at 20mph they can only sit and watch their rivals catch them up on the best 100mph winds going over China.

However it was a rocky start for the Breitling Orbiter 3 in Chateau d'OEix and for Brian Jones, the British co-pilot who was standing on top of the capsule as it launched.

The same fast winds that have the team confidently predicting they will be around the world in 15 days caused the 55 metre high silver balloon to strain at its tethers.

It crashed down to earth five times with alarming crunching sounds, rocking Mr Jones



on his feet before it finally shot up into the air at 8.05am.

Mr Jones, 51, a ballooning instructor from Devizes, Wiltshire, had earlier asked the 5,000-strong crowd to sing Happy Birthday to Bertrand Picard, his Swiss co-pilot who was 41 yesterday.

This was forgotten in the anxiety of take-off. "It was a

very difficult dangerous take-off," said Joanna Jones, his wife, a balloon pilot and member of the Breitling mission control team.

"Balloons are not meant to bounce like that and to make it worse this is the first time Brian has been on top of the capsule as it launches."

"It makes it worse to know

how dangerous this can be. I was trying not to watch but it all got a little bit more emotional than advertised."

Within three hours of launching the pilot announced that the balloon had been undamaged by its battering and predicted they would be over Morocco by this morning.

They aim to be on the Pacific coast by this weekend, gaining at least a week on their rivals and possibly overtaking them.

"This is tedious low level manoeuvring," said Ian Achpole, flight director for Cable & Wireless. "But it's important to get around China, and still have enough fuel to get all the way around the world."

The Cable & Wireless balloon is predicted to be close to the coast of Burma by this morning. The Breitling headed at 17mph over the Matterhorn and on to Turin and

Nice. By this morning the Breitling team hopes to be travelling over the coast of Morocco and by tomorrow to Mauritania where they aim to pick up a 100mph jet stream heading for China in around six days.

Just before lift off Mr Jones said that the Breitling team had never felt so confident.

"The idea that we are taking off in a last ditch attempt at the end of the season couldn't be further from the truth," he said. Instead, he said, the winds were faster than they had predicted.

The Cable & Wireless team has given up efforts to repair a faulty heater, which has left Colin Prescott and Mr Elson forced to wear Arctic survival gear at high altitudes.

A spokeswoman said: "It is not ideal, but it is not mission threatening, so they will just be putting a brave face on it."



Brian Jones kisses his wife Joanna goodbye

**Boy, 13, is not guilty over death of brother**

A BOY aged 13 who accidentally killed his brother with a knife bore no responsibility for his death, a judge said yesterday.

Mr Justice Poole told Leeds Crown Court that Daniel Cooper was not guilty of a manslaughter charge arising from the death of his brother, Richard, 18, and that he should "put this matter behind him".

The judge's comments came after the prosecution dropped a charge of murder against the boy, then offered no evidence when he pleaded not guilty to an alternative charge of manslaughter.

Adrian Marron, QC, for the prosecution, told the court that Richard Cooper, a builder's labourer, had been stabbed through the eye during an argument at the family home in York last December.

Mr Marron said that after struggling with his father, John, Richard had grabbed Daniel by the face with both hands.

"Daniel grabbed hold of a nearby kitchen knife. He held it by the handle with the blade pointing up. There is no suggestion that it was held in a stabbing fashion," he said.

Mr Marron said that when Richard suddenly moved forward the blade of the knife penetrated his eye and brain. He died in hospital the following day.

Paul Worsley, QC, for the defence, said: "This was a tragic accident, as young Daniel has always said."

**Take That star challenges £1m court decision**

BY JOANNA BALE

ROBBIE WILLIAMS, the reformed bad boy of pop who won three Brit Awards this year, began another court room battle yesterday with the man who launched his show-business career.

Lawyers for the 25-year-old performer are challenging a High Court ruling that he must pay his former manager, Nigel Martin-Smith, £90,000 in commission under the terms of a complex management agreement. At stake is an estimated £1 million when legal costs, VAT, interest and further ongoing commission are assessed.

The case, in the Court of Appeal, dates from 1995 when Mr Williams left Take That, the phenomenally successful five-piece boy band created by Mr Martin-Smith in the late 1980s. Michael Silverleaf, QC,



Williams: second legal fight with ex-manager

**Clowes is jailed for benefits fraud**

BY A CORRESPONDENT

for the singer, told how Mr Williams decided to leave because he found "the right restrictions" imposed by Mr Martin-Smith to maintain the band's clean-living image "somewhat difficult".

"There is no dispute that Mr Williams, in terms of his ability to perform, was widely perceived to be the funnyman with the ability to get the audience going... he was generally regarded as the frontman."

Aluding to Mr Williams's penchant for alcohol and drugs, from which he has now recovered, Mr Silverleaf added: "Mr Williams began to go out to parties and enjoy himself, which caused friction. He began to talk about leaving because of his desire to get on and work on his own, but he made it quite clear that he was quite happy to fulfil all the commitments of the band."

However, the other members of the band, Gary Barlow, Jason Orange, Mark Owen and Howard Donald, told Mr Williams that Mr Martin-Smith had advised them that he should leave immediately.

Mr Silverleaf argued that Mr Martin-Smith was therefore not entitled to the commission because he had breached the management agreement. "Instead of organising the dissolution of the band amicably, he decided to protect the remaining four."

The hearing continues.

*Salvatore Ferragamo*



BUTTERFLY

**PC pounds beat in search of jury**

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A JUDGE faced with a shortage of jurors ordered a police officer to go out into the street to press-gang passers-by. But not one person agreed to help.

Judge Richard Hayward ordered the rare move when an indecent assault trial in his court at Lewes, East Sussex, was delayed for four hours after a female juror failed to attend.

He sent PC Dave Bielkus to find a replacement but the men and women in the street, showing a marked lack of civic duty, all made excuses and left. The problem was resolved only when a jury was summoned three hours earlier final-

ly arrived in a taxi. The incident occurred on Friday but details were not disclosed until the trial finished yesterday to avoid any possible prejudice to proceedings.

A jury of 12 had been sworn in on Thursday and the prosecution had opened its case before Judge Hayward adjourned the proceedings overnight. On Friday morning, no trace could be found of a female juror in her 20s.

Judge Hayward was forced officially to discharge the 11 remaining jurors to allow a fresh group of 12 to be selected and sworn in, but all potential jurors were by then serving in other trials.

Court staff tried to contact Howe

Crown Court, ten miles away, to see if it had any spare jurors, only to get an answerless message. Finally a spare juror did arrive from Hove to bring the pool of available jurors up to 12.

That still left a problem: a jury has to be selected at "random" and for that to happen a pool of at least 13 must be available. Judge Hayward agreed to send court staff outside to "summon someone on the street". Eventually, a 13th juror arrived more than three hours after being contacted at home and told to take a taxi.

Mark Venables, 21, from Hove, East Sussex, was found not guilty of inde-

Alexandra Frean on the Royal Commission's proposals

THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

# Elderly may not have to sell up to afford care

ELDERLY people could be spared the anguish of having to sell their home to pay for long-term nursing or residential care. Proposals unveiled yesterday by the Royal Commission on Long-Term Care for the Elderly proposed making all nursing and personal care — including administering medication and help with washing and dressing — free to all those who are assessed as needing it.

Normal living and housing costs would remain the responsibility of care-home residents under the proposals, which would cost the state £1.2 billion to implement in the first year.

The radical proposals also include raising the savings level — including the value of a home — that a person can have before they have to start paying for their own care, from £16,000 to £60,000.

The new system would be overseen by a National Care Commission, headed by a "care czar", which would enforce minimum standards and monitor costs.

A dissentent note, signed by two of the 12 commissioners, rejected the main proposals as

## THE FUTURE

too costly and recommended that people should be able to borrow against the value of their home to fund care.

Sir Stewart Sutherland, chairman of the commission, said that the current system of funding long-term care, which divides responsibilities between the State and the individual, was complex and confusing and created real fear among those approaching old age. "This is a scandal in modern Britain and it must be changed," he said.

"If we have a heart attack or cancer, we know that the health service we have paid for through our taxes will deliver the care we require without further payment. But if we are unfortunate enough to become frail and need care through old age, we suddenly find we are expected to meet some or all of the costs ourselves. This is not right," Sir Stewart said.

Other recommendations include:

■ The value of a person's home should be disregarded for up to three months after admission to care in a home, to

ensure that people are able to return to their own home if needed.

■ The opportunity for rehabilitation should be included as an integral part of any care assessment.

■ Budgets shared between health, social services and other statutory bodies should be integrated.

■ Local authorities should be allowed to make loans to individuals who need aids or housing adaptations that will enable them to stay in their own home.

■ A national carer support package should be introduced and £220 million a year set aside to help carers. This would need to rise to £700 million by 2050.

■ More emphasis should be given to delaying illness and dependency on long-term care, through health education and more preventive medicine.

Sir Stewart said it was important to "shatter the myth that the nation cannot afford to pay for personal care for its old people". There was, he insisted, no such thing as a "demographic timebomb" and the cost of care was affordable.

"We have taken advice from the most eminent economists and we are confident that we have got our sums right," he said.

The nation currently pays £11.1 billion a year on long-term care for the elderly, including contributions from individuals. This would rise to £45 billion by the middle of the next century. If the proposals were implemented, the State's share of costs would rise from £8.2 billion at the moment to £33 billion by 2050.

Organisations representing the elderly welcomed the report and urged the Government to act on it immediately.

Leading article, page 23



Patricia Davey: "My mother's generation thought they had paid their dues and they would be looked after in old age."

## The age-old dilemma

### THE MOTHER

£380 a week. This is because her savings — including the value of her house — come to more than £16,000. Once her assets have been reduced to £16,000, the State will be liable for some of the costs, and once they fall to £10,000, the State should pay her fees in full.

Mrs Davey, from Morley in Leeds, is upset at having to sell her mother's home. "It is not a very nice feeling, especially when you know that people who do not have a home to sell get all their care for free."

She welcomes the commission's recommendation that no pensioner should have to pay their own nursing and personal care costs. "My mother worked in the mills during the war and after that always had a job. Her generation saw the NHS come into existence. They thought they had paid their dues and that they would be looked after in their old age."

**'State cannot foot bill for all'**

### THE DISSENTERS

By JILL SHERMAN  
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A MINORITY report from two members of the Royal Commission rejects the main recommendations as too expensive but suggests that elderly people should be able to take out a government loan to avoid selling their homes.

David Lipsey and Joe Joffe have produced a "dissenting" report, which argues that the poorer taxpayer should not be footing the bill for care of those on higher incomes. They suggest an extension of private insurance for nursing and residential care by extending pension tax breaks, while accepting that it cannot entirely replace funding from taxation.

The two commissioners recommend that the Government allocates £300 million to cover the shortfall for nursing and residential homes. They also suggest raising from £16,000 to £30,000 the level of savings allowed before people have to pay for their care, and changing the amount payable if savings drop below £30,000. They call for the end of the anomaly where people in nursing homes pay for their care whilst those in hospitals, residential homes and their own homes do not.

## Means-testing is unpopular and seen as unjust

By ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE PRESENT system of means-testing for care in old age is deeply unpopular and perceived as grossly unjust.

Many people who have carefully saved all their lives and paid off their mortgage regard it as unfair that they should have to use up all their savings and sell their family home in order to pay for their care, while those with no savings get it free from the State.

Under present rules, people who move into a residential or nursing home have to pay all the costs until their income (including state benefits) and savings (including the value of their home, if they live alone) have been reduced to £16,000, at which point the State will pay for part of their care. Once savings fall to £10,000, the State will meet the full costs.

One way to protect assets is to take out a long-term care insurance policy. Depending on a person's health, gender and age, a monthly premium of between £50 to £70 could be expected to provide up to £10,000 care cover a year.

Elderly people needing care can no longer rely on their immediate family to provide it.

In a recent survey only 40 per cent of adults said that if a parent needed care they would try to look after him or her themselves; 55 per cent said they would not expect their own children to look after them.

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'State  
cannot  
foot bill  
for all'

THE DISCENTERS

THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

HOME NEWS 5

# Oxford college sees drink as bar to success

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

AN OXFORD college is considering a cut in bar opening hours in an attempt to improve students' examination results.

Reducing evening opening by an hour is one of a series of measures academics are discussing with undergraduates at St Catherine's. At present the college languishes 28th out of 30 in the Norrington Table, the unofficial league table of Oxford colleges' academic performance.

Students are fiercely critical of the plan, which would restrict opening hours from 8pm to 11pm instead of 7.30pm to 11.30pm. More than 250 protesters packed into a routine junior common room meeting normally attended by only 50.

An unofficial poster on the college's JCR notice board invited academics to set a better example by cutting their own consumption of wine at college dinners. The poster suggested it would ensure dons were on top form "to lead their sinful students back to academic paradise" rather than branding them "feckless delinquents on Castlemaine".

Balveen Ajimal, the JCR president at St Catherine's, said yesterday that students generally thought the idea of reducing bar hours was a bad

one. She said: "It would encourage people to go out into town, which takes more time. It might encourage people to drink more in a short period of time and there is a benefit of having people in college when they are going to drink rather than send them into town."

Ms Ajimal emphasised that a number of measures were being considered to raise academic standards at the college following meetings between the JCR and fellows. "The relationship between the two has been good, with quite a bit of give and take. I hope the idea about the bar will not be seen as a punitive measure, rather than one of many constructive suggestions being considered. The governing body is having a big rethink about how the college is performing. There will be no quick changes."

An academic policy committee, set up at St Catherine's to increase standards, is expected to make a number of recommendations to the university's governing body.

Ms Ajimal said students and staff shared a mutual desire to raise standards, including the quality of tuition and lecturing. Both sides wanted to investigate ways of ensuring students got more out of their degree. The primary aim in

maturing students and there are only about 120 of us."

"Our bar is like a small living-room. Few of us ever over-indulge. There are not many students who are under 30 and we are quite happy to have a couple of glasses of wine after dinner."

Tony George, bar manager at St Catherine's College, said that he rarely saw more than 50 students on a weeknight, and that many of them wanted only a can of cola. "They don't drink massive amounts. If you reduced the opening hours they would just go into town and drink there," he said.

Balveen Ajimal, St Catherine's JCR president, said: "We are more laid-back here than at other colleges where there is much more of a bar culture. We have a pool table and television and they attract as many people as the alcohol."

She conceded, however, that last year's favourite tipple was a "bit dubious". "It was called Cuban Fire and I think it was a type of rum punch. Fortunately, most students have gone back to drinking beer," she said.

## Students say study and alcohol do mix

STUDENTS at Balliol College, Oxford, believe that their results relate any link between bar opening hours and poor academic performance (Helen Johnstone writes).

Balliol, whose students enjoy the longest bar opening hours of any Oxford college, shot up to fifth place from 19th in this year's Norrington Table. Neville Eisenberg, the college's junior common room president, said: "It is absolutely ridiculous to suggest that closing the bar would improve academic results."

He attributed Balliol's success to its strong academic record. "Ours is one of only two bars at the university run by students and we open from 6.30pm to 11pm," he said. "If people want to drink, they will go into town to drink, and that would result in more problems."

Harris Manchester College, bottom of the Norrington Table, yesterday denied that alcohol consumption had anything to do with its position. Caroline Barnes, 26, a JCR spokeswoman, said: "Our college is low in the table only because it is small. We are all

## Duke cuts rents by 15 per cent

By CLAUDIA JOSEPH

A VILLAGE that spurned an offer of £80,000 from the National Lottery for a new leisure centre was yesterday celebrating a far smaller grant to improve its existing hall.

The 352 residents of Llanbedr, near Crickhowell in Powys, said last year that they were "too middle class" to accept the initial offer from the lottery's Millennium Fund, and that poor former mining communities in the valleys of South Wales would be worthier recipients.

The issue split the village, with those who wanted a new leisure centre accusing their neighbours of snobbery, but in a mini-referendum last year residents voted 135 to 76 to keep their old hall.

Yesterday the National Lottery Charities Board, a separate body responsible for allocating lottery money, agreed to spend £87,000 on the 70-year-old brick hall, at which generations have held harvest festivals and fêtes.

THE Duke of Northumberland has agreed to cut his tenants' rent by 15 per cent. The duke, 41, who is one of Britain's wealthiest men, has offered the 170 tenants, who pay between £55 and £65 an acre, the choice of a rent decrease or improvements on their farms.

He told them: "The last 18 months have been the worst in living memory. Poor weather and low yields, on top of a high pound, low prices and SSE, have produced a rotten cocktail."

The duke's family seat is Alnwick Castle, set in 100,000 acres, as well as Syon House in London and a shooting lodge in Berwickshire. The tenants' farms range from 200 to 1,000 acres and Northumberland Estates has a turnover of £10 million.

□ EU talks on farm spending were postponed until Thursday after France protested that some proposed reforms were too radical.

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Pet rescue: a fireman reaching for the trapped Armani



Back behind bars: the hamster after its two-day jaunt

## Firemen dig deep to save hamster

A PET hamster that disappeared down a drainpipe at its owner's home in Aspley Guise, Bedfordshire, was eventually rescued by firemen from the garden patio yesterday.

One fire engine and a rescue unit with 12 firefighters on board attended after Armani could be heard by her owners scratching underground. The firefighters had to dig a deep hole to expose the pipe and free the animal, and that meant ripping up the patio.

Armani, a female hamster, was eventually freed by a fireman who had been lowered head first into the fit hole by his colleagues. The firefighters had earlier sent a remote-

controlled camera down the pipe and were able to see where Armani was stuck.

The trouble began on Saturday when the hamster escaped after being let out of its cage during a power cut.

Karen Wakefield, 32, her husband Tim, 37, and their sons Tom, 7, and George, 5, searched by candlelight for Armani. But when the lights came back on, there was no sign of the pet hamster.

The search continued on Sunday and yesterday morning Mrs Wakefield heard the sounds of scratching from a pipe that ran from under the kitchen sink to the garden outside. The family called in the fire brigade.

## Catholic school bans Red Nose Day

By ADAM SHERWIN

A HEADMASTER has banned pupils from taking part in Red Nose Day because funds raised by the charity Comic Relief support projects that promote contraception.

Children at Rosary Roman Catholic School in Saltley, Birmingham, will not be allowed to wear red noses or collect money at school for the appeal on March 12.

Jim Caffery, the head, said: "We are against Red Nose Day because of its support for contraception, abortion and sterilisation, which I believe is a moral evil."

Mr Caffery's stand was supported by the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Media Office said: "People will question whether family planning is a need in the same way as acute poverty."

Comic Relief said that misleading information had been circulated about its activities. "We do not fund abortions or sterilisation. We fund work that promotes informed choice about family planning," a spokesman said.

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# Lottery Scandal

## Could it have been you?

The lottery begins at birth.

The odds are, one in three babies will be born into poverty.

This is not the developing world we're talking about. This is here, now, in Britain.

The downward spiral that leaves thousands of children excluded from society is random, relentless and no fault of their own.

Where you happen to be born can have a profound effect on the rest of your life.

The highest concentration of disadvantaged children can be found in only 59 local authority districts in the country. They may be no-go areas to some, but they can be no-exit areas for the young people who have to grow up there.

How can we gamble with the future of children this way?

With 3.3 million existing in families with less than half the average national income, children are now the largest group caught in the poverty trap.

So where does the buck stop?

With government? Or with each and every one of us?

The Children's Society believes we all have a responsibility to the next generation.

And with your help, we can do something to redress the balance between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'.

## When the disadvantaged become the disappeared

Every year thousands of children fall through the net.

In the local areas, where these children are concentrated, more than 25% of them will begin life as underweight babies, they have a 30% higher mortality rate and they are twice as likely to die in childhood accidents.

These same children are disadvantaged in education. They can become disruptive in class. Unable to cope, schools exclude them in their thousands - 150,000 exclusions in a single year. The majority are children from poorer homes.

Without a decent start in life, many young people never catch up.

Truancy in these deprived districts is currently running at four times the national average.

While one in four pupils at secondary schools near rundown housing estates, leave at sixteen without a single GCSE, five times the national average.

The vast majority of underage pregnancies can be traced back to the same areas.

4,700 girls of school age fell pregnant in 1998 - more than any other country in Europe.

Uneducated, unhappy young people will buck the system when they feel abandoned by it.

Many turn to crime. And pay the price.

Britain locked up 11,000 teenagers in 1998. That's a 40% increase in just five years - a depressing European record.

A staggering 43,000 children run away each year.

Life on the streets can be desperate and dangerous, with the real risk of being caught up with drugs and prostitution, simply to survive.



## Beating the odds

Many of the problems children face are complex and interlinked.

The way we see it, they demand an holistic approach.

There is no quick fix. But there is progress to be proud of. Last year The Children's Society helped nearly 40,000 children, directly.

We are the only national charity working with youngsters on remand in prison.

We were the first to open a refuge for those at risk on the streets, the first to develop programmes in primary schools to proactively prevent exclusions and the first to introduce family centres.

Whilst our resources are modest, the impact we make on children's lives is not.

Helping them realise their full potential, enables them to act as catalysts for change within their own neighbourhood.

The Children's Society is their advocate, advisor, friend.

*"When Mum left we stayed with Dad. He couldn't get work so they took our home. Social Services put us in one of them bed and breakfast places. Dad and my brother were upstairs, I was on another floor. It was horrible. The guy in the next room started touching me. One night he tried to rape me. They were going to put me and my brother in care. It was the people at The Children's Society that stopped it. They talked to me lots about what happened. And they helped us get a flat. Life savers, that's what Dad calls them."*

Karen aged 14

As a Voluntary Society of The Church of England and The Church in Wales, we reach out unconditionally to children when they are at their most vulnerable.

And they are nearer than you think.

The vast majority of you live within a short car ride of real poverty. To see exactly how close you are to the most deprived areas in England, Scotland and Wales, you can phone for our Lottery Scandal Map.

Being born in the wrong place can extinguish every opportunity a child might have in life.

Which is why your support is invaluable. By helping to fund our work, you will be helping those children who have never had a decent chance.

It shouldn't be a lottery.

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# Owen embraces Eurosceptics

Pro-Europe but anti-euro group says it would share platform with hardline sceptics, writes James Landale

LORD OWEN, head of the new pro-European but anti-single currency lobby group, admitted at its launch yesterday that he was prepared to share a platform with Tory Eurosceptics.

New Europe is designed to provide a voice for pro-Europeans opposed to the euro who do not want to link themselves with right-of-centre Eurosceptics. Lord Owen, the former Labour Foreign Secretary who led the breakaway Social Democratic Party, insisted the group was deliberately distinguishing itself from existing Eurosceptics. "We are quite unashamedly and unapologetically supporters of the European Union," he said.

But he did not rule out sharing the platform with anti-EU Tory MPs such as Bill Cash during a referendum campaign. "If I'm opposed to the single currency at that stage, I would be ready to join with others to campaign," he said.

New Europe, in its statement of principles, also admits that it intends to "work closely" with Business for Sterling.

an anti-euro grouping of industry and City interests. The launch came as the Government began to put into practice plans announced last week to prepare Britain for potential membership. Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, told a pro-Europe business conference that he wanted the Government's enterprise fund to be paid in euros. Businesses will also be able to pay patent fees in euros and submit accounts in euros.

The advisory council of New Europe comprises 14 political figures, businesspeople, economists and journalists who believe that Britain's membership should not be seen as inevitable. They said: "We do not say never but we cannot foresee at present a change in circumstances that would persuade us of the case for joining. We believe that there are significant economic dangers for Britain in joining the euro that would seriously compromise our competitiveness. We are convinced that Britain will continue to flourish within the EU but outside euroland."



Single-minded about the single currency: Lord Prior, Mary Ann Sieghart and Lord Owen at the launch of New Europe

Directors: Sir Ewen Ferguson, former Ambassador to Paris; Martin Taylor, former chief executive of Barclays Bank; Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, former chairman of J Sainsbury; and Janer

Bush, New Europe director and until recently Economics Correspondent of *The Times*.

The new group was greeted sceptically by pro-Europeans. One said: "They are just trying to dress up the anti-euro camp

and make them more respectable." Colin Sharman, chairman of KPMG International, said: "Being in the EU but not being in the euro is roughly the equivalent of being half-pregnant. The proposition real-

ly is half-baked and business will not wear it."

■ New Europe website: [www.neweurope.co.uk](http://www.neweurope.co.uk); E-mail: [info@neweurope.co.uk](mailto:info@neweurope.co.uk)

Business, page 31

MPs in attack on ministers' arrogance

MPs are expected to demand more independence for select committees after growing complaints about ministerial arrogance (Philip Webster writes).

Ministers are also being warned against trying to intimidate backbenchers in an attempt to get an easy ride from the committees. The chairmen of all 27 select committees are being urged to put forward their ideas for reform to the Liaison Committee. There was particular anger recently over the Foreign Affairs Select Committee report on arms to Africa which was rubbished by Downing Street before it was published.

Conservative as well as Labour chairmen are calling for the whips to lose control of appointing members of the committees, which is seen as the key way of the executive retaining control.

## Lords need more power, not less

**T**he Wakeham commission on the future of the House of Lords that met for the first time yesterday has a choice. It can either deliver the minimalist package which the Government wants, or it can think boldly.

The Government, and most Labour MPs, would like something not very different from the present House but without hereditary peers. It would remain a revising chamber.

... and might have a special role in relation to devolved assemblies, Europe and the Human Rights Act.

But that would be to miss a big opportunity.

of custom, a principle of English property law.

On a more serious level, Lords Cranborne and Richard, the last two Leaders of the Lords, focused on powers. As Lord Cranborne argued: "Paradoxically, a more authoritative Lords would help the Commons to perform better by forcing it to legislate better and to hold the Government to account more rigorously."

Lord Richard, in the best contribution from the Labour side, noted that the lack of legitimacy means that the Lords cannot perform as effectively as it should. So in this country we have virtually a unicameral system". On his view, "the aim of reform should be to strengthen the second chamber to the point where it has the legitimacy vis-à-vis the Government of the day to carry out its functions properly but not to threaten the position of the Commons". There should continue to be independent members and no one party should be able to command a majority. But such a second chamber would be bound to become more troublesome to the Commons.

The central issue is powers. The Government's White Paper addresses the paradox that the Lords possesses theoretical powers almost as great as the Commons (apart from financial Bills) but observes self-denying ordinances. The White Paper suggests that the current understandings about self-restraint might be institutionalised, leaving the powers intact but restricting the circumstances when they might be used, or the theoretically available powers might be reduced, though they might be used more often.

This passage was frequently quoted in the two-day, 90-plus speaker debate in the Lords last week. This was the usual mixture of the interesting, the reflective, the confused, the complacent and the downright daft. Lord Belhaven and Stanton, whose title dates to 1647, offered the thought that "democracy is new and comparatively untried. We do not know what will come of it over the decades and centuries to come". Lord Norrie, with a mere 42-year-old title, argued that hereditary peers sat by right.

There is also a strong case, as Lord Lamont of Lerwick argued, for the Lords to be given the role of "constitutional long stop" — with the right to insist, by a qualified majority of perhaps two thirds, that constitutional Bills should be considered by a referendum. As Lord Lamont concluded: "If this House is to be liberated from its inhibitions, it should not be afraid to demand more powers." The Wakeham commission now has the chance to make a reformed second chamber a central part of a new constitutional settlement rather than just produce a political fix.

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THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

HOME NEWS 11

# We still need Smiley's people says Le Carré

The Cold War is over but the spy writer believes the Secret Service has a vital role, reports Michael Evans

**SPIES** should not come in from the cold, despite East-West détente, the spy writer John le Carré said. The former MI6 intelligence officer declared in a rare lecture that spies are needed more than ever.

Le Carré, who flourished as an author during the Cold War era of espionage and intrigue, said that when the world's power blocs were split between East and West, spying was an easier business. Now, with the former Soviet Union fragmented, Britain's spies had a tough challenge to keep pace with the proliferation of problems in many of the world's smaller countries.

"There is plenty of scope for intelligence work," he said during a lecture at the Liverpool Unity Theatre. "In the future, I

think the great burden of intelligence work will be counter-terrorist, from wherever the terrorist threat comes. It will also be concerned with international crime on a grand scale."

The author, whose latest novel, *Single & Single*, has just been published, worked for both MI5 and MI6.

Last month he ended a long-standing mystery when he revealed that George Smiley, his most famous fictional hero, celebrated in such books as *Smiley's People*, was not modelled on the former MI6 chief Sir Maurice Oldfield, as had been supposed. He said that the character had been partly based on the late John Bingham, the 7th Baron Clanmorris Bingham, who served with MI6, was known in the intelligence community as "Lord Clandestine".

In the literary lecture, Le Carré said: "The secret services simply have to remain responsive and responsible and very much under the control of parliamentary democracy. I don't think there is a case for saying they should not exist any more."

"We expect them to find out who is going to blow us up next and if they don't do it, we say they are inefficient, but we don't say that we should abolish them."

MI6, like other sections of the security and intelligence world, has suffered cuts since

## Plankton could help to reverse global warming

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

FERTILISING the sea with iron filings dramatically accelerates the growth of plant plankton, which absorb large amounts of greenhouse gases, an experiment in the Southern Ocean has shown.

Researchers who had spent the month spreading filings over 19 square miles of Antarctic waters 2,500 miles southwest of New Zealand returned to Wellington yesterday enthusiastic about the results.

Rob Murdoch, of the New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, said: "Not only did the numbers of phytoplankton bloom extensively but they were responsible for absorption of a significantly greater amount of carbon dioxide during the study period compared with the seas outside the area," he said. "The plankton in the growing patch also produced significant quantities of gases known to be important in cloud formation."

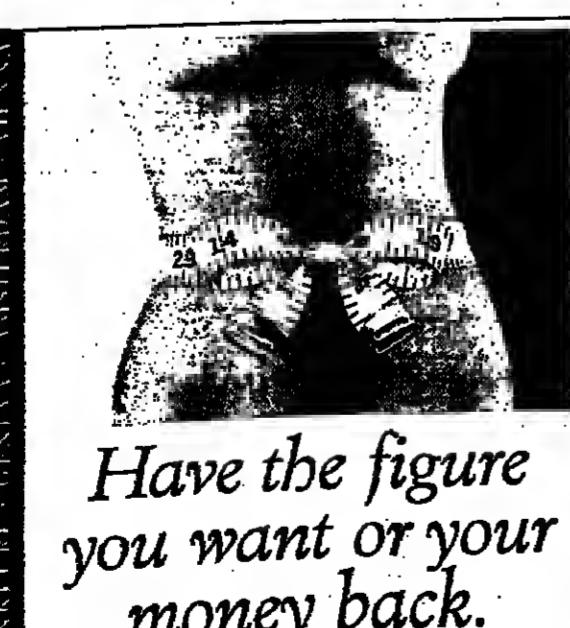
The aim of the research was to see whether the filings would replenish stocks of plankton, which form the foun-

dation of the ocean's food chain, and to discover whether the microscopic plants captured excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and contributed to cloud build-up.

The late John Martin, an American oceanographer, theorised in 1995 that phytoplankton needed iron in order to take nitrogen and phosphate from seawater, just as farm crops need trace minerals such as zinc and manganese.

Subsequent experiments showed that half a ton of iron filings triggered 30-fold to 40-fold increases in plankton stocks over areas of up to 193 square miles. This resulted in up to 9,000 tons of carbon dioxide being "locked up", and a three-fold increase in dimethyl sulphide particles, which have a key role in cloud formation.

Scientists believe that if the fertilisation could be done on a large enough scale in the Southern Ocean it could reduce the concentration of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere by between 6 per cent and 21 per cent, significantly cooling the planet.



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Anna Molinari is feted on the catwalk after her Blumarine show in Milan yesterday

## Milan shows no fear when it comes to fur

FROM DEBORAH BRETT IN MILAN

ITALIAN fashion has never succumbed to anti-fur pressure and the women of Milan refuse to venture out in winter without their fur coats.

Anna Molinari's diffusion label, Blumarine, coiffed the love affair with a show yesterday that had mink trimmings on scoop-neck jumpers, coat collars, jumper cuffs, even inside parka hoods. The soft-sell came in every colour — from candy floss pink and sky blue to ice white.

Blumarine girls still haven't grown up and yesterday looked as if they had been trawling through their mother's dressing room — in bright-red lips and green eye shadow thickly applied. The year of influence was impossible to pin down: Molinari had decided to pick and choose from Twenties flapper girl, Fifties prom queen and Seventies rock chick.

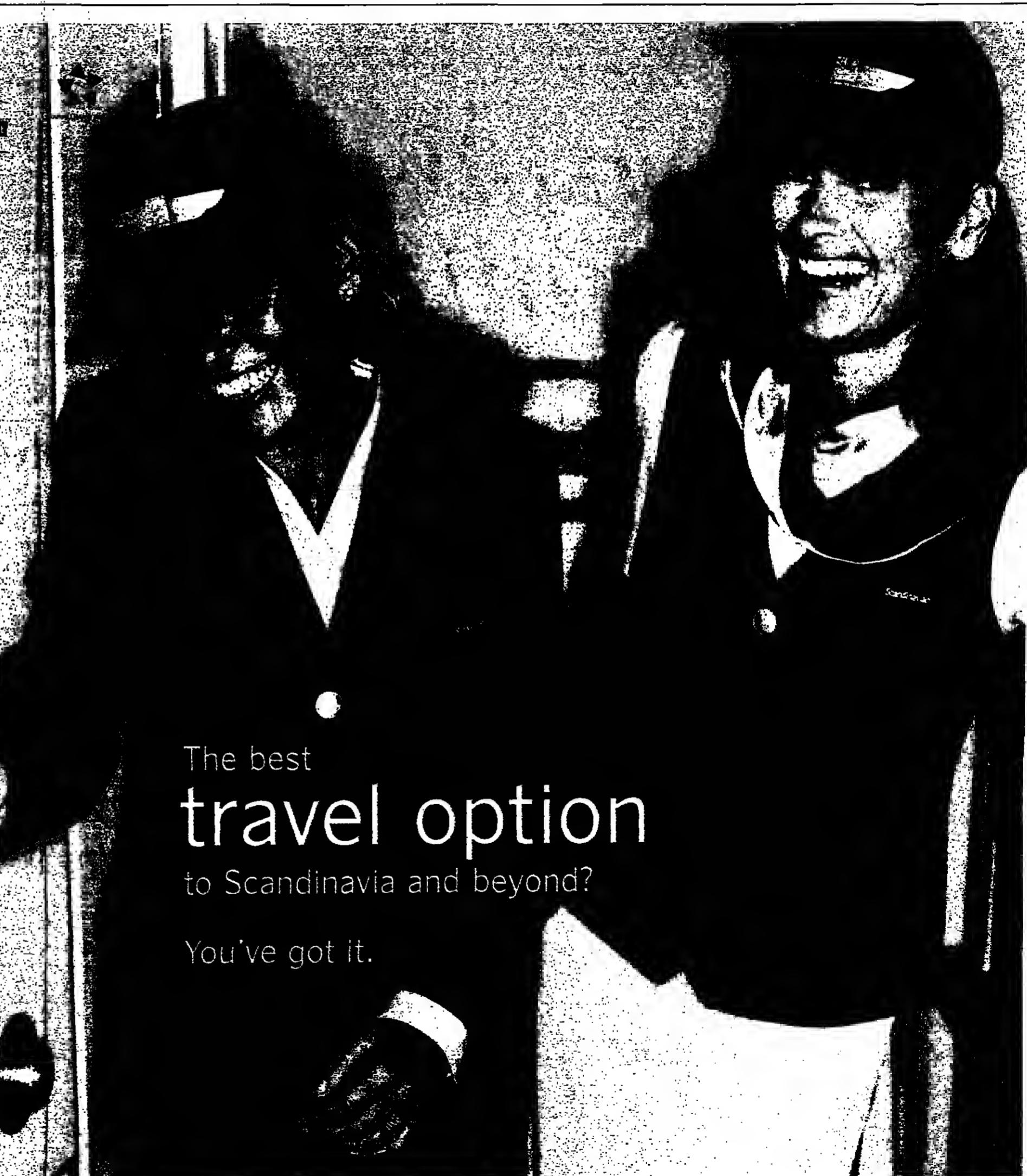
Giorgio Armani was also in age-defying mood yester-

day: at the age of 64, he has made his younger line even younger. There was not a suit in sight, let alone his trademark beige, at the Emporio Armani show. Instead, next winter, fans of Mr Minimalist will be in a pared-down version of urban chic.

The theme may have been colour, with an abundance of aqua, turquoise, sea green and red, but this was only for accessories: the core clothes were in every shade of grey.

With the emphasis on sportswear, there were attachable hoods, Velcro-fastening trousers, and leather jackets with elongated arm zips. Accessories for the urban warrior included shoes made from thick elastic strips and pouch bags.

Armani's signature detailing came only towards the end of the show, with beading — normally seen edging scarves and jacket laps — sewn in strips to the top edge of nude bodystockings.



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# US appeals for calm after raids on Israel border

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE United States yesterday sent urgent diplomatic messages to Israel, Syria and Lebanon, urging restraint in the new crisis along Israel's northern border in an attempt to prevent tension in the region escalating.

The messages were sanctioned by Madeline Albright, the Secretary of State, and reflected the gravity with which Washington views the situation after the killing on Sunday of an Israeli general, a subsequent cross-border rocket attack and Israel's vow of retaliation "by land, sea and air" against the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrillas.

The American intervention came as Israel's security Cabinet met in emergency session and vowed instant and wide-scale action if Hezbollah fired more rockets into northern Galilee in retaliation for punishing Israeli strikes. Those

strikes were launched deep into Lebanon after the killing of General Erez Gerstein, two soldiers and Ilan Roeh, 32. One of Israel's most famous war correspondents, Mr Roeh was buried yesterday at a funeral attended by thousands.

Israeli officials, mindful of the American call and damaging international publicity in 1996, caused by Operation Grapes of Wrath — Israel's last widespread Lebanon offensive in which some 200 people were killed — said that the Israel Defence Force would not step up attacks if the guerrillas refrained from firing rockets into Israel.

That decision was not popular with many Israelis living in the northern area. They left shelters and sealed rooms at 2pm yesterday after an "all clear" ended an alert that had lasted 24 hours and ruined the start of the festival of Purim.



A Shia Muslim guerrilla preparing yesterday for the threatened Israeli offensive

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\*The World's Most Admired Companies, FORTUNE\* magazine, 26th October 1998.



## Civilians in buffer zone wait stoically for big offensive

FROM NICHOLAS BLANFORD IN TIBNINE

Thousands fled homes and hotels to spend the holiday out of Katyusha rocket range. Many who stayed in the bleak town of Kiryat Shmona urged the Government to launch a massive offensive.

Hours after Brigadier-General Erez Gerstein was killed by Hezbollah guerrillas on Sunday, warplanes staged air raids in frontline areas as Israel vowed to unleash an air, sea and ground offensive.

Tension remains high throughout the occupied border zone. The skies above Tibnine were filled with the roar of Israeli F16 aircraft and the buzz of piloted observation planes.

In the village of Siddiqine, Mehdi Zaarour, 48, said: "It cannot get any worse for us than it already is here... we are used to being shelled by the Israelis, it is a daily occurrence."

Siddiqine is near the village of Qana, where 107 civilian

ians were killed when Israel shelled a UN base during the 16-day Operation Grapes of Wrath in April 1996. "Forty-eight people from Siddiqine were killed in Qana. What more can Israel do to us?" said Mr Zaarour.

Schools were closed yesterday and children were told to remain close to village bomb shelters.

In the village of Majdal Slem, which frequently bears the brunt of Israeli shelling, almost half the residents had fled in fear of an offensive.

"We are afraid [and] it's very tense," said Nahla Salouloun, 44, one of several women watching over children outside the village's bomb shelter. "I will stay because this is my village, my land and my country. The Israelis will never force me to leave."

Maryam Zahwi, 20, said that Israel would never defeat the Lebanese. "They have their planes and missiles, but we have our resistance and our faith," she said.

## WORLD IN BRIEF

### Religious riots in Indonesia kill ten

**Ambon, Indonesia:** At least ten people died as new clashes between Christians and Muslims rocked the Indonesian island of Ambon. Six people were tortured to death in one clash and another four were killed as security forces opened fire near a mosque. The official Antara news agency said the first deaths occurred after homemade bombs exploded. The agency added that low-ranking policemen had allegedly ignited the mob.

Local journalists said the other incident happened at about dawn as Christians attacked the city's eastern Baru Merah district and Muslims fought back. Security forces then arrived and opened fire, they said. One witness said the police opened fire without warning on Muslims leaving the al-Huda mosque.

General Wiranto, the armed forces' commander, has launched a crack anti-riot force to quell what he called the most "brutal rioting" in Indonesia's history. (Reuters)

### Cuba dissidents on trial

Four of Cuba's most prominent political dissidents, including Vladimir Roca, went on trial behind closed doors in Havana on charges of sedition stemming from the publication of a document in 1997 that criticised government policies (David Adams writes). Tight security was enforced to keep away demonstrators, and dissident groups in Cuba say at least 34 opposition activists have been rounded up by police recently to limit any possible protest. Others are under virtual house arrest.

### Greek Ocalan protest

The statue of a Greek philosopher outside Athens' University, right, has been blindfolded by art students to show their support for Abdullah Ocalan, the Kurdish leader. Turkey is to allow a Norwegian parliamentary delegation to attend Mr Ocalan's treason trial after turning down other international requests. Lars Risa, a Norwegian MP, said the invitation was made by Uluç Gurkan, the vice-president of Turkey's national assembly, on condition that the Norwegians did not call themselves observers. (Reuters)



### Sydney terror warning

**Sydney:** The Islamic terrorist, Osama bin Laden, may target the Sydney Olympics next year because of Australia's friendship with the United States, Louis Freeh, the director of the FBI, said (David Warr writes). A large contingent of American athletes and spectators could make the Games an attractive target, said Mr Freeh, who is in Australia advising the Government on anti-terrorism and anti-drug strategies. Australia has been free of Middle East-related terrorism.

### Rebels 'slaughter' 1,000

**Freetown:** About 1,000 civilians died, mostly murdered by rebels, during a six-week Revolutionary United Front occupation of Waterloo, a town near the Sierra Leonean capital, according to Ansuhama Kargbo, a headman. He said most of those who died had fled into the bush when the rebels were chased from the capital last month. Troops from Econog, the Nigerian-led regional intervention force, backed by civil defence groups, retook Waterloo last month and recaptured Waterloo last week. (AFP)

### Mines treaty enforced

**Ost:** Jody Williams, left, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997, urged all nations to ratify an anti-landmine treaty as it came into force yesterday, and hailed her award as a boost for the cause. Mrs Williams, co-ordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, said that 134 countries had signed and 65 had ratified the treaty, aimed at removing an estimated 100 million landmines in at least 60 countries. The treaty, concluded here in September 1997, was opened for signature in Ottawa the following December. (Reuters)

### Seven die in rough seas

**Lisbon:** Seven crewmen died and one was missing last night after they abandoned their crippled cargo ship in rough seas off the Azores in the North Atlantic. The three remaining crew survived. A passing Japanese merchant vessel picked up four crew from a liferaft. The men had abandoned the *Sky Bird*, a container ship, officials said. However, one of the men in the raft was dead. Six other crew who jumped into the sea were found dead in the water, while a search went on for the missing man. (AP)

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# Kosovo victims find death in bitter sanctuary

FAITH in the West is melting with the winter snow for the civilians of Gjare. Stranded by fighting on the precipitous slopes above the Llaka river, the 350 ethnic Albanian villagers, 170 of whom are younger than 18, are scratching an existence in the open and freezing in the sub-zero night temperatures.

The international community's empty threats and promises are little more than bitter memories.

Two days ago, Kosovo Liberation Army guerrillas moved into the area near their small community, about six miles north of the Kosovo-Macedonian border along the main Pristina-Skopje highway.

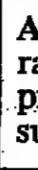
A flurry of skirmishes in the preceding days had already robbed several hundred people of their homes.

On Sunday morning, four Serbian police drove into Gjare. The captain was killed and his three colleagues were wounded in the burst of gunfire that met them.

The Serb response was predictable and unforgiving.

Anti-aircraft guns and scores of infantry saturated the area with fire in a six-hour attack. Caught in the middle, Gjare's civilians fled a day's journey to the Llaka ravine, where they remain — too frightened to return home.

"We have ended up here through no choice of our own," Shiqirje, an Albanian woman, said. "If it snows again we can



Anthony Loyd, at the Llaka ravine, hears echoes of broken promises as villagers battle to survive winter onslaught

only continue to stay here. I am afraid the Serbs would kill us if we returned home. The way I see it, I'd rather be dead in the snow than killed by her.

After previous massacres in Kosovo, the terror and uncertainty of these people is very real.

Shiqirje, a mother of six, spoke with the life of her youngest child, a six-month-old girl, fading away beside her. "Look," she continued.

Last October a deal was agreed between the American special envoy, Richard Holbrooke, and Yugoslavia's President Milosevic, aimed at halting the exodus of refugees. It was backed by the threat of Nato intervention, and stipulated that all Serb security forces should withdraw to barracks and abide by a ceasefire.

Violations of the pact led to an escalation of Nato threats in the new year, and latterly stalled the negotiations at Rambouillet.

The refugees recall those promises with fatalism. "What can I say? What can I think?" asked Shiqirje's husband. "If Nato wanted to intervene it would have done so. I didn't believe the October promise, and I don't believe them now.

pointing to the comatose porcelain face of the child. "My baby is dying. She is too cold. There is not enough food. She cannot even open her eyes any more."

Death was close to many there: the pregnant woman who lay sick and glassy-eyed on a blanket of straw (she was due to give birth three days ago); the 82-year-old man sprawled in the mud; Shiqirje's daughter, and others.

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The refugees recall those promises with fatalism. "What can I say? What can I think?" asked Shiqirje's husband. "If Nato wanted to intervene it would have done so. I didn't believe the October promise, and I don't believe them now.



A child from Gjare huddles in a makeshift hammock tied to trees in the ravine refuge

The only thing left is for some of us to die here. Some will survive to carry the fight on. Maybe at the end we'll win something."

Shortly after midday, two vehicles from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation

in Europe, sent to Kosovo last autumn to verify the October accord, arrived on the scene. The monitors, members of the 1,200 OSCE staff in the province, were well-intentioned, but appeared unable to help. They could not transport

two of the sicker babies, taken by journalists to Gjare for evacuation, to the nearby hospital at Kacanik, for fear of aggravating the Serb police. Their task, after all, was only to monitor, as the afternoon chill set in once more.

Haughty critics had argued that his restaurant at Laguile, deep in the rural heart of the Aveyron, would never achieve the ultimate gastronomic accolade, not only because it closes each year from October to April, but because the waiters are attired in simple cowherds' smocks and M Bras insists that his customers use the same knife for each course.

Yesterday, M Bras, 52, who was awarded his first star in

1982 and won his second five years later, attributed his success to his mother and the rugged Aubrac countryside where he grew up.

"My mother and Aubrac gave me a sense of what is beautiful and good, they taught me to do wonderful things with very little," he said. "My dishes tell a story ... I want them to bear witness to the countryside, the rocks, the skies and the light which make up my life here."

## Bonn warned of cash flight by industry

Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, is facing a revolt by big-name companies which are threatening to transfer investment abroad unless Bonn overhauls its tax reform plans.

The latest challenge came from RWE, the German energy and industrial group, which said the heavier tax burden — proposed by Oskar Lafontaine, the Finance Minister, and due to be approved this week — would make the company think twice about investing in a brown-coal mining project in the Ruhr.

"It is a question of at least 14,000 jobs," said Dieter Schweer, a spokesman. "If the investment position is no longer attractive, we will examine every possibility of switching our investments abroad." Since RWE is a powerful industrial player, with interests well beyond the energy sector, the threat is being taken seriously.

It comes on top of a broadside from Allianz, the country's largest insurance company. The tax reforms penalising insurance companies would have a devastating effect on its profits. Since the company has extensive foreign interests — 60,000 out of its 100,000 employees work outside Germany — its headquarters could be shifted abroad to London or Zurich.

London was clearly in the mind of Henning Schulze-Noelle, the chief executive, when he suggested in an interview that the business could operate "just as well in another country of the European Union".

If Allianz left Germany, it can be assumed, would its German competitors. And the disgruntlement of the two businesses reflects broader unhappiness throughout German industry. Corporation tax in Germany is at 45 per cent, though this can be reduced with clever book-keeping. In Britain it stands at 30 per cent.

RWE's complaint is that the plan would force utility companies to pay taxes on capital reserves. Dietmar Kuhnt, RWE's chief executive, said: "Business is thus reaching for the emergency brake."

If you tell your  
girlfriend,  
will she think  
less of you?

## Star of the East brings new light to Michelin firmament

FROM SUSAN BELL  
IN PARIS

A CHINESE restaurant on the Left Bank was awarded a coveted Michelin star yesterday, making it the only Asian restaurant in France to hold such an honour in the new edition of the prestigious restaurant guide.

Chen-Soleil d'Est, a rosewood oasis in a 1970s shopping complex in the capital's 15th arrondissement, joined

The Oriental at the Dorchester Hotel in London as the only Chinese restaurant in Europe worthy of a Michelin star.

Fung Ching Chen, the chef, who moved to Paris from Shanghai in 1972, won acclaim for his excellent Peking Duck, which actually hails from Brittany. It is served as three separate dishes — the crispy skin in a crepe with chives, the meat and as a broth. His delicately flavoured *Boules de Neige parfumées à la Noix de Coco* also

met with the judges' approval. "I have been cooking for 30 years and this is the greatest event in my life," said M Chen on hearing the news.

His establishment is the first Chinese restaurant in ten years that has proved capable of pleasing the exacting taste-buds of the Michelin inspectors.

Another surprise came yesterday as a third star was awarded to unpretentious chef, Michel Bras, whose authentic cuisine used herbs and mountain plants long before they became fashionable.

Despite the growing popu-

larity of exotic food in France, the country boasts only one other ethnic restaurant considered worthy of a Michelin star: Tingad, a North African restaurant in the 17th arrondissement which specialises in couscous and tajines.

Another surprise came yesterday as a third star was awarded to unpretentious chef, Michel Bras, whose authentic cuisine used herbs and mountain plants long before they became fashionable.

Despite the growing popu-

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You may be lucky enough to be able to talk to someone in your family. Then again, you may be one of the large number of people who find talking to your nearest and dearest agonisingly embarrassing.

A girlfriend or boyfriend? If you can, great. But sometimes we don't want to expose our weaknesses to those who fancy us.

And sometimes your relationship is

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# China vents its anger over Taiwan

Beijing accuses  
Pentagon of  
pushing arms  
sales, writes  
James Pringle

ON THE second day of a strained visit to China by Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, Beijing launched a furious attack on America over Pentagon reports that the Chinese were building a major missile force with the intention of intimidating Taiwan.

Zhu Bangzao, for the Foreign Ministry, said yesterday that the Pentagon report on the military situation in the Taiwan Strait was a "serious interference in China's internal affairs". The official Xinhua news agency quoted him as saying: "China expressed its serious dissatisfaction and resolute opposition."

Xinhua added that the report was part of an American plan to step up sales to Taiwan of advanced weapons such as ballistic and cruise missiles.

The Pentagon assessment — sent to Congress last week and released on Friday — did not imply that Beijing was planning to carry out an attack against Taiwan and noted that the situation in the Taiwan Strait was calm. However, it did emphasise that Beijing, which considers Taiwan a renegade province, has refused to renounce the use of force against the offshore island.

Analysts believe that, in the event of a military confrontation breaking out, Beijing could overwhelm Taiwan's



Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, and Tang Jiaxuan, the Chinese Foreign Minister, at the conclusion of their joint press conference in Beijing yesterday

current missile defences and superior air force by 2005, to the sheer weight of numbers of its weapons.

American law allows sales of defensive arms to Taiwan despite both Washington's transfer of diplomatic ties to Beijing in 1979 and China's opposition to any arms sales to the island. Washington has angered Beijing by selling F16 warplanes. Patriot missiles and other advanced weapons to Taipei.

In an illustration of the blunt nature of the current Sino-American dialogue, Ms

Albright said at a joint press conference with her Chinese opposite number that Washington deplored Beijing's crackdown on pro-democracy activists, while Ms Tang, the Chinese Foreign Minister, accused the US of "wantonly interfering in other countries' human rights questions as an excuse," he added.

But Ms Albright, who yesterday also met Zhu Rongji, the Prime Minister, said that human rights were a "question of grave concern".

In a reference to the crackdown on dissent that began late last year, and continued this past weekend with the detention or jailing of several dissidents, Ms Albright added: "We have deplored the actions that have taken place recently

and I will raise those issues with the Foreign Minister."

Last Friday the US State Department released an annual report saying that human rights deteriorated sharply in China last year. Quarrels over human rights, satellite sales and defence policy show that the goodwill from summit meetings in the past two years between President Clinton and his Chinese opposite number, Jiang Zemin, did not lead to a unified point of view.

But Ms Albright and Mr Tang also said that, in the long term, relations had improved

and they were committed to narrowing the differences between their countries, being given long jail terms.

Out in open China has jettisoned all Beijing's foreigner-restricted areas — set up in 1958 to protect "state secrets".

Foreigners found in the areas marked by 118 checkpoints and usually containing military barracks or accommodation for top-level officials, would be removed. Some were deported. Most areas were opened in 1985, when all

but two of the last restrictions had gone. Last year about 2.13 million foreigners visited the city. (APF).

**'Stolen' children sue the state for damages**

FROM DAVID WATTS  
IN SYDNEY

LORNA CUBILLO wept uncontrollably as she relived the horror of the day in 1947 when she was wrenched from her family. She is middle-aged now but has never forgotten the day she was put on a lorry with 16 other children aged from seven months to 11 years and taken from her parents. Ms Cubillo is one of the "stolen generation".

She told her story yesterday in Darwin at the opening of a legal case against the Federal Government seeking compensation for the suffering visited on Aboriginal children under the White Australia Policy.

As the lorry pulled away a baby was dumped in Lorna Cubillo's arms and she, a seven-year-old, was told she would be responsible for it. At first, she thought she was going on a picnic, but the screaming of the grief-stricken Aboriginal mothers, racing after the lorry, alerted her that this was no picnic. It turned out to be a two-day drive through outback Northern Territory to Darwin and nine years in an institution.

Her story, and that of other Aboriginals forcefully assimilated as part of the White Australia Policy, is something the country is struggling to come to terms with.

When Peter Gunner was grabbed he believed he was going to be killed. "I didn't see the welfare blokes and they grabbed me and held me by the arms and dragged me to the truck. I went mad screaming to my family to help me, but they didn't move. They couldn't do nothing about it."

He is a joint party with Ms Cubillo in the first civil action of its kind, being brought against the Government by the stolen generation. They are seeking both compensatory and punitive damages for wrongful imprisonment and breach of a vast range of duties. A previous case, brought by other plaintiffs in 1997 on constitutional grounds, failed.

But if this action is successful it will have implications not only for 700 others seeking similar redress but also the 30,000 or so British orphans who were sent to Australia, beginning in the inter-war period. It will leave Australia with little choice but to confront the question of compensation.

## Military maverick declared Nigeria poll victor

**General must show he is not army stooge, writes Sam Kiley in Lagos**

supporters in the People's Democratic Party. Mr Falase's All People's Party was equally at fault, according to the Nigerian Transition Monitoring Group, which deployed 10,700 observers across the country.

General Obasanjo pledged to continue the process of democracy and said that he did not believe that any elections

could be perfect after his 63 per cent win was formally announced. Nigerians will now be looking to the general to make good his campaign pledge to stamp out corruption and show that he is no stooge of the armed forces, anxious to keep a handle on power.

To many members of the south in particular, he is nothing more than a stalking horse for a northerner-dominated military unwilling to leave Nigeria's political stage open to civilians. To his supporters in the north, he will be a trustworthy custodian of their interests. He has allowed them to let go control of the presidency and favour a power shift to the south without risking a national fragmentation. However, the general has a habit of conjuring up both his critics and his fans.

Born to humble farmers in 1937, General Obasanjo finished his high school education, but was too poor to take up a university place. Like many growing up in the transition from British colonial rule to independence in October 1960, he saw a future for himself in the army, which provided an education at the Mons Officers' Cadet School in England, and engineering training in Shrewsbury, Oxfordshire Service with the

United Nations in Congo was followed by the Biafran War in 1967.

It was in Biafra where he earned national recognition in a daring, maverick manoeuvre. Ignoring orders from Lagos and the operational plans of a rival divisional commander to the north of secessionist Biafra, the then Col

### RESULTS

**Official voting figures:**  
Obasanjo: 18,738,000 (62.5%)  
Falase: 11,110,000 (37.2%)

General Obasanjo launched a surprise attack on the breakaway region, forced a surrender and emerged a national hero — much to the irritation of Nigeria's generals and other divisional commanders.

"It was a shock and embarrassment that, while we were waiting for our own D-Day which had been planned for January 15, he invaded from the south and got all the glory," said retired Major-General Theophilus Danjuma, then a colonel and now a close friend tipped to be Defence Minister. General Obasanjo, 61, has been President before, when he took over after a military leader, Murtala Mohammed, was assassinated in 1975. Four years later he became the only military dictator to hand power back voluntarily to civilians. General Obasanjo at the end of May.

The latter's relative poverty, and role as a Commonwealth emissary to apartheid South Africa, have ensured him international and domestic credibility.

"One cannot help feeling

that he's probably the only person around who might be able to do the job," said Karl Maeir, an observer at the elections and West Africa analyst.

But if this action is successful it will have implications not only for 700 others seeking similar redress but also the 30,000 or so British orphans who were sent to Australia, beginning in the inter-war period. It will leave Australia with little choice but to confront the question of compensation.

King of the ro



Obasanjo: has vowed to stamp out corruption

A couple (male and female) both non-smokers, aged 25, applying for a PEP mortgage of £60,000 secured over 25 years on a property with a purchase price of £150,000. Assuming a discounted mortgage multiplied on 10th May 1999 with competitive charges £11,720, valuation fee £165, legal disburse £252.33 and other charges at end of mortgage term and interest rate of 14.89% p.a. The application is for a mortgage of £60,000 for a term of 25 years and a charge on full value of £150,000. The interest rate is 14.89% p.a. and the monthly payment £321.70. Total annual payable £11,472. Calls to our helpline are free and unlimited. You must be aged 18 or over and give us a valid legal over your property. We may need additional mortgage security. We will take into account your personal and financial circumstances and the value or price of your property. These and the product you choose will affect how much we lend you, how much buy-to-let landlords value your property and what, if any, additional mortgage security fee, arrangement fee and repayment fee you have to pay. This product or offer is only available to customers remunerating and all income buyers. Our products and offers are subject to conditions. We can withdraw them without notice. For more details and written quotations, call at your local office. The repayment term will end on 30th April 2024. If you repay a special rate loan before the end of the repayment term, we will charge you a repayment fee. The repayment term will end on 30th April 2004. The repayment fee will be a percentage of the special rate loan paid. This service is not available for mortgages on property on the site of War. Our final decision to lend depends on the value or price of your property.

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**Police had to rescue Anwar in cell attack**

BY DAVID WATTS

ANWAR IBRAHIM was lucky to escape with his life when he was assaulted while handcuffed and blindfolded by the then Malaysian chief of police last year. The commission of inquiry into the beating has already heard medical testimony that his injuries were potentially fatal.

Yesterday Yaacob Muhammad Amin, the director of the Criminal Investigation Department, testified that he and his deputy had to pull Rahim Noor, the police chief, off the former Deputy Prime Minister to stop the assault.

Mr Yaacob said that he was outside the cell when he heard a voice in Malay saying: "Don't hit me". He and his deputy, Ramli Yusof, rushed inside. "Then I saw Tan Sri Rahim [Noor]. I grabbed his belt and pulled him with my right hand towards me, with my left hand holding the bar of the cell... Ramli was pushing Rahim away and I pushed Rahim out of the cell. We had to get Rahim out of the cell."

All this happened on a day when the police chief later assured the foreign press that Mr Anwar was "safe and well". Halim Mansar, a forensic science expert at Kuala Lumpur General Hospital, examined Mr Anwar four days after the assault and he testified that there were multiple injuries that were "very dangerous for the victim. The extent of the injuries was very severe".

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**'Stolen'**  
children  
sue the  
state for  
damages

THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

# Car fumes make Los Angeles the cancer capital

FROM GILES WHITELL IN LOS ANGELES

CANCER-CAUSING chemicals in car exhaust fumes have left residents of Los Angeles hundreds of times more at risk of fatal disease than the federal Clean Air Act allows, according to a government study that is likely to send shock-waves through the healthcare and automotive industries.

The congressional study of air quality in America's second-largest city, published yesterday, reveals airborne carcinogens at levels 426 times higher than those established as safe nine years ago.

The alarming figures "should give a jolt" to the city, a spokeswoman for the Natural Resources Defence Council in Washington, said. "We know our air is dirty, but now we know in black and white that it's toxic too," he added.

Los Angeles smog, which for decades has driven film stars to the coast for the relief

brought by onshore breezes, has already prompted the nation's toughest car emissions standards.

But yesterday's report showed that little has been done to curb invisible compounds in vehicle exhaust that target internal organs and may be behind the region's stubbornly high cancer levels.

Butadiene, benzene and formaldehyde cause tumours in human lungs, breasts, ovaries, liver, thyroid glands, testes and other organs, tests have shown.

All three are present at unusually high levels in the air over the Los Angeles basin, where clinics such as the John Wayne Cancer Wing at the Cedars Sinai Medical Centre have treated a steady stream of famous — and merely rich — cancer victims, including Larry Hagman, Michael Landon and Gilda Radner.



Ford's outsize four-wheel-drive vehicle, the Excursion

IT IS the size and weight of a respectable log cabin, but so much more versatile (Giles Whittell writes). With room for the entire extended family and three average cars' worth of luggage, the Ford Excursion will be the largest mass-produced four-wheel-drive when launched later this year. Welcome to the age of the behemoth, when the oil crisis of 1973 is but a hazy memory.

Unveiled last week at Ford's Michigan headquarters, the Excursion is expected to prove once and for all that size does matter in the heartland. Longer and wider than its biggest rival, the Chevrolet Suburban, the \$50,000 (£35,000) Excursion is nearly 19 feet long and weighs 3.5 tonnes when empty. The sporty version will offer a stately ten miles per gallon on city streets.

"It appears that motor vehicles create the largest portion of the toxic risk in terms of their emissions," Barry Wallenstein of the local Air Quality Management District said.

The Clean Air Act set a target of exposing only one American in a million to the risk of cancer through bad air quality. In Los Angeles that index is now at 470 per million, the study found, while in neighbouring Burbank, where much of the film industry is based, 483 per million are at risk.

Smoking is still more dangerous than breathing the air in Los Angeles — 250 times more dangerous for an adult with a one-pack-a-day habit, according to the report.

Nonetheless, American environmentalists hope that it may not be long before, in a hitherto unthinkable development, petrol-burning cars are required to carry public health warnings.

Britain has standards for two of the chemicals identified in the California study — benzene and butadiene (Nigel Hawkes writes). Both are exceeded in urban streets, but improvements now being made should mean that the standards are met by 2005.

But Roger Higham, of Friends of the Earth, said that there may even then be hot-spots in the centres of cities, and around petrol stations, where levels continued to exceed the limits. Both of these chemicals are present in fuel and reach the air as it is pumped into cars.

Last year the European Commission proposed a tougher limit on benzene. To meet it, emissions will have to fall by 70 per cent more than already planned. Similar limits on other carcinogens, including butadiene, are expected to follow.

Colonel Cad Williams, the superintendent of New Jersey's state police, had been at the centre of a controversy over allegations of "racial profiling" in apprehending drivers since white officers fired 11 times at four unarmed non-white youths whose car was pulled over on the way to a basketball game in April.

In an interview with a local newspaper, Colonel Williams condemned "racial profiling."

ONE of America's top policemen has been fired for suggesting that drug crimes are associated with particular ethnic groups, and accusing Jamaicans of running his state's heroin trade.

Two weeks ago the President of the United States went to Mexico to talk to the President of Mexico about drugs, he said. "He didn't go to Ireland. He didn't go to England..."

"If you are looking at the methamphetamine market, that seems to be controlled by the motorcycle gangs, which are basically white," he added.

"If you are looking at heroin and stuff like that, your involvement there is more or less Jamaican."

and denied it was practised by his force. But he insisted it was naive to believe that race was not an issue in drug trafficking and other crimes.

Two weeks ago the President of the United States went to Mexico to talk to the President of Mexico about drugs, he said. "He didn't go to Ireland. He didn't go to England..."

Controversy over police racism is also raging in New York, where four white members of a "street crimes" unit shot dead a Guinean immigrant armed only with a beeper, firing a total of 41 times.

The police union protested yesterday against a "grossly offensive" cartoon on the cover of the latest New Yorker, showing police at a fairground shooting gallery with a sign reading: "41 shots, 10 cents."

Black politicians, churchmen and civil rights activists expressed outrage, and Chris-tine Todd Whitman, the Governor, dismissed Colonel Williams.

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TWO American senators want experts from the nuclear powers to get together next New Year's Eve to eliminate any chance of a year 2000 (Y2K) computer problem triggering a false missile alert.

The experts would assemble at a temporary centre in Colorado Springs, where America's missile-tracking headquarters — the North American Aerospace Defence Command — is buried deep inside Cheyenne Mountain.

Russia has already agreed to a proposal by Washington to set up a temporary joint early warning system to avoid any risk of the Y2K millennium bug causing a nuclear Armageddon. But the senators are recommending that America should try to bring the other nuclear powers, including China, India and Pakistan, to Colorado Springs.

The pair, Robert Bennett, a Republican, and Christopher Dodd, a Democrat, are leading a Senate committee on the Y2K problem.

Mr Dodd said the experts should be in the same room for the critical period when older computer systems — using only the last two digits of a year — could malfunction by misreading the year 2000 as 1900. "If something does break down, we've got people there who can monitor it and make quick decisions," he said.

The missile watchers at Cheyenne Mountain do not believe in principle that there is any danger of an inadvertent nuclear launch caused by the Y2K bug. Missiles are not, after all, fired by computers, but by human computers. They do see a risk, however, of confusion in the event of one country suffering a blackout or breakdown in the power supply to its nuclear systems that could leave other countries "blind" to its intentions.

The experts would sit at a round table and be in touch with their head offices by telephone. They would be able to give reassurances if any of them showed signs of having a problem.

The proposed name for the Armageddon watch room is the Centre for the Year 2000 Strategic Stability. Edward Warner, the Under-Secretary of Defence, will go to Moscow with a Pentagon working

OVERSEAS NEWS 15

## Senators seek to avert risk of Armageddon

Ian Brodie in Washington reports on a plan to beat the millennium bug

group this month to meet their Russian counterparts and make plans for the centre. It will be operational from the beginning of December this year until the middle of January 2000.

A continuous stream of information will be made available to the Russians via American satellites and ground sensors.

Last year, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin agreed to pursue development of a permanent joint early warning centre in Russia to continuously share data on missile launches. But it will not be ready by the end of the year.

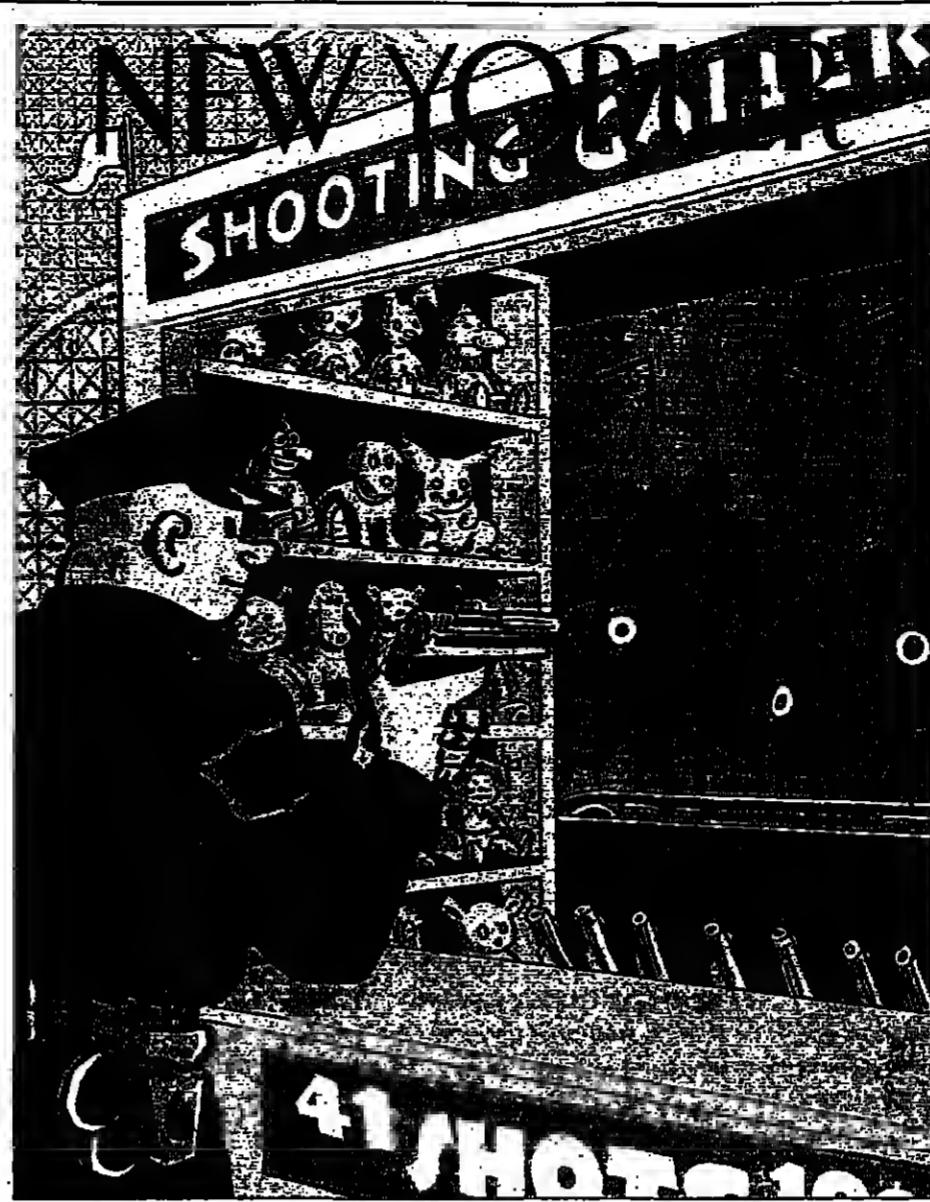
Pentagon officials said the Russians knew about the bug and its potential for disruption, but had not yet dedicated enough money or people to fight it.

A report from the two senators says an accidental nuclear launch is unlikely. But Mr Bennett said: "When we get to New Year's Eve, everybody, no matter how informed we think we are, is going to be holding his breath."

The senators also gave a warning of non-nuclear millennium problems in America, including potential power cuts and problems in doctors' surgeries and hospitals, where Y2K preparations are lagging badly.

They stopped short of issuing a Doomsday warning, but said Americans would be well advised to stock up on two or three days' supplies of food, much as they would for a blizzard.

**LINKS**  
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/y2k/>  
 The Home Office site contains with information about the response of the public sector bodies to the bug.  
<http://www.bug2000.eu.uk/> — Website of the Action 2000 Agency.  
<http://www.milsoft.com/bsbail/year2k/> — The Microsoft Year 2000 centre, with information about how Microsoft products are affected by the bug.



The latest New Yorker showing a policeman shooting civilian silhouettes at a fair

## New Jersey police chief is sacked for racial 'slur'

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

ONE of America's top policemen has been fired for suggesting that drug crimes are associated with particular ethnic groups, and accusing Jamaicans of running his state's heroin trade.

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## 'Female Viagra' revellers suffer seizures

New York: Revellers at a wild birthday party on Manhattan's Upper West Side started dropping to the floor and two women were rushed to hospital with breathing difficulties after guests took a herbal remedy dubbed the "female Viagra" (James Bone writes).

Partygoers were drinking beer with chasers of "Invigorate" — touted as a miracle drug that can put users in a good

mood, help them to lose weight, build muscle and improve their sex lives. The lemon-flavoured drug contains a compound known as gamma-butyro-butyrate, or GBL — also used in "date-rape" by men who slip it into women's drinks.

The dietary supplement was pulled from chemists' shelves in January when the US Food and Drug Administration reported that 55 people had suffered adverse

reactions to substances containing GBL, including one woman who died. It can still be purchased on the Internet, where it is described as the "Fountain of Youth".

As many as a dozen people at Saturday's party fell ill, having downed shots of the potion, which is meant to be taken by the teaspoonful. "The party was out of control," said one host. "People were dropping to the floor and having seizures."



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# The idle vow that cost £1m, payable in sweat

John Spurling is running the London Marathon against all advice, says Jon Ashworth

**M**any people say things they regret after a drink or two, but few on the scale of John Spurling, a semi-retired businessman. Last year, over drinks in Langan's Brasserie, he agreed to compete in this year's Flora London Marathon despite never having run anywhere in his life. Worse, he pledged to raise £1 million for charity.

Overweight and out of condition, Spurling, 59, embarked on a training programme under which he will have run 1,500 miles by the time his ordeal is over. Even his trainer tried to talk him out of it. But Spurling is a man obsessed, and on marathon day, April 18, he intends to complete the 26 miles even if it takes all day.

Spurling has spent much of his life in Kenya, which is known for its long-distance runners. He has attracted pledges of £80,000 so far, which, if he finishes the marathon, will easily outstrip the previous individual best of £44,000, raised in 1982 by Sir Roger Gibbs to fund a new body scanner at Guy's Hospital. His endeavours will benefit animals and children, through the Animal Health Trust and the Lord's Taverners, whose chairman is a close friend.

Preparing an out-of-shape man for such a punishing ordeal is no small challenge. Spurling runs at least ten miles a day, six days a week, using a treadmill in his Central London flat, and admits that it has been tough. "The first time I tried to touch my toes, I could only get to my knees," he says. "I'd never done any exercise except golf."

Five months into his training, he has run 800 miles, his blood pressure is down and he has lost weight. "I cut out all carbohydrates except for a bowl of cereal in the morning — no bread, no rice, no pasta — and I started losing weight fast. The body's fat turns into carbohydrates, so it starts to eat the fat away."

Weight loss or not, people think it is crazy. John Major, who has pledged money, told Spurling he had "lost his marbles". Sir Denis Thatcher, on hearing of his quest at a Lord's Taverners event, shouted:

I tried to touch my toes but I could only reach my knees



John Spurling (left) limbers up in Hyde Park with his personal trainer, Lee Saxby. He trains on a treadmill at home

athons and there must be a risk in punishing your body in this way. His wife, Gwyneth, says she panicked initially, but takes comfort from the fact that there have been only five marathon deaths in 18 years. Whatever happens, the charities will get their money. Spurling has insured his life for £1 million — just in case.

Anyone who wishes to support John Spurling can send donations to: The Animal Health Trust, Lord's Taverners Marathon Challenge, 22 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AA. Everyone who makes a pledge will receive a thank-you certificate signed by more than 40 celebrities. Cheques should be made payable to AHT/ Taverners Marathon Run.

## Harder they run, higher they fly

Addictive side-effects and a sense of achievement motivate the contestants, as Victoria Fletcher discovers

ed to the physiological side-effects of exercise," she says.

These side-effects are crucial in motivating many of the less likely marathon runners to continue their gruelling training regimes.

When intensive exercise is undertaken, a reaction occurs in the brain to quell the physical pain and mental torture. Research has shown that these natural endorphins have the same effect as drugs such as heroin. The athlete feels elated and his/her sense of pain is suppressed.

"The endorphins make runners feel 'high,'" Thomas says. "Combine this with the fact that being fit makes people feel good about themselves and their bodies, and even the most lethargic manage to keep on training."

Control is also important for runners. Thomas believes that many people who feel they are not enthusiastic when they start training, but most find that they become addic-

tion to reward from completing their training and improving their times."

"Many people never feel that they can do it. Then they train and realise that they can reach little targets. They are in control and build confidence until they begin to run greater distances," she says.

"However, when they stop, they often get a sense of depression because both the psychological and physiological rewards stop."

Keeping the mind occupied and determined is one of the hardest battles for the marathon runner. Dr Sarah Rowell is a sports science consultant and former British women's marathons record holder. Despite her talent and fitness, she admits that there was not a single race where she did not consider dropping out.

"The mental challenge is almost greater than the phys-

## Pushing the body beyond normal limits

AVID runners need have no worries about their cardiovascular system. Provided it was normal when they start the London Marathon, the heart will still be beating bravely at the finishing line.

There is no evidence that strenuous physical exercise in temperate climatic conditions does any long-term damage to the heart, and runners are therefore unlikely to expire en route. There are occasional deaths among athletes, but this is usually the result of a dangerous arrhythmia: the result of undetected disease.

Although minor arrhythmias are common during heavy exercise, they don't usually cause disasters and when they do, it is usually because the runners were unaware that their coronary arteries were in poor fettle, either because they have some congenital disease of the arteries or the aortic valve, or more frequently that their coronary arteries were already plagued with atherosclerosis. This is the fatty material that furs up arteries — sudden exercise sometimes causes one of the plaques adherent to the artery wall to rupture, with the result that debris may block a vital artery. Occasionally, calamity follows an undetected cardiomyopathy, an overgrowth of heart muscle and enlargement of the heart to the point where it no longer functions efficiently.

None of the marathon runners should be taking part if they have a temperature, or even if they think they are sickening for a dose of flu or other infection. The heart is much more vulnerable to transitory infection than is sometimes realised, and it is thought that some of the unexpected sudden deaths in young athletes each year are because, despite having a temperature, they have ventured out on to the pitch rather than sitting by a warm fire.

Detecting heart disease in an athlete isn't always easy. Some endurance athletes who, day by day build up their physical prowess, develop the athletic heart syndrome. The heart becomes enlarged, the heart rate becomes very slow, and they develop various changes in their ECG pattern that strike terror into the non-specialist doctor, particularly as the patient may also have acquired a multiplicity of murmurs.

Although a harmless syndrome, it is not a diagnosis that can be made in five minutes at the end of a busy surgery, and its true nature should be confirmed by an expert.

If athletes were chased by a

pack of hounds down the Embankment and were then bundled away by human rights protesters, their blood serum analysed and their urine examined for traces of haemolysed blood, the results would be alarming. Every headline next day would be crying out for such a cruel sport to be abandoned, and earnest doctors would discuss whether, if it hadn't been for their skilful attending, the runner would have died. Marathon running certainly pushes the body beyond the limits that it would normally have to endure, and there is transitory damage to the muscles and joints.

Although marathon runners are at risk of exposing hitherto unsuspected heart disease, they are more likely to suffer from other problems over the years. The runner should remember that he hasn't the hounds of hell chasing him, and that even if television cameras are present, and everybody from the office is cheering him on, it is essential

## MEDICINE CHEST

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

to stop if the pain is intolerable. Likewise, stop if chest pain or a very severe headache is noticed. Feeling dizzy, loss of concentration and orientation so that everything becomes a blur is an indication that it is time to melt into the crowds after visiting the first-aid tent.

In the unlikely event of a very hot day, heatstroke and heat exhaustion are risks for the unfit. Pounding the pavements results in excessive wear and tear of the spine and arthritis of the intervertebral joints — this is only partially prevented by having shock-absorbent soles on roomy trainers and doing as much running as possible on grass. Knees and feet are also affected and the arches of the athlete's feet are likely to be as painful and flat as those of the proverbial policeman. Toes are hammered against the end of the shoes when running; the nails when raised from their bed make an ideal cranny for fungi and athlete's foot.

The overenthusiastic athlete may also pay an emotional price. Research a few years ago showed that marathon runners are more likely to divorce — psychiatrists regard excessive exercise as an interesting symptom.



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## ■ OPERA

Terfel's Aussie triumph

# Set for a royal liaison

**DANCE:** Royal Ballet choreographer Michael Corder is on a spectacular roll, Allen Robertson reports

**H**e has just plucked the juiciest plum off the tree. The Royal Ballet has invited Michael Corder to choreograph the first new full-length ballet to be danced by the company when it moves back into its renovated home at Covent Garden. A staging of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, it will be performed to a commissioned score by Richard Rodney Bennett.

Despite a career that spans 25 years and includes some 40 ballets, this will be the first time that Corder, 43, has worked with a commissioned score. "My entire inspiration for choreography — emotionally, rhythmically, stylistically, structurally — comes from the music I choose. Music has always been my canvas. I use it to find my colours and my textures."

He has wanted to stage this 18th-century drama for nearly a decade now. "Ever since I first had the idea, I have been trying to find the right composer. I have listened to Russian, American, French, even German music, trying to find the right style. Then I stumbled across a piece by Richard."

"I liked his music immediately. He is wonderfully rhythmic and he is not afraid to use melody. And, even though he is now based in New York, he is English to boot. I had never

**'This year's cutting edge is next year's passé'**

been seen as part of the Royal Ballet's *Dance Bites* tour in Bath. Choreographed to the orchestral suite from Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, it features costumes by Anthony Ward.

"It is called *Masquerade* because I wanted to make it clear right from the start that this is not *Pulcinella*. There isn't a narrative. I want you to see it as a suite of dances." So Corder has sidelined Stravinsky's arch commedia dell'arte scenario. "I like the atmosphere and the smell of those commedia stories, but *Masquerade* is a musical piece coming from a musical standpoint."

"For me," Corder insists, "dance is always about dancing. If you can say something



Michael Corder rehearsing his new ballet *Masquerade* with members of the Royal Ballet: "I've got more and more Classical as I've got older".

better by writing an opera or a play or doing a film or a musical, then do that. I am interested in pieces that relate to dancing.

"If it doesn't sound too old-fashioned, I do believe dancing is spiritual. It is the beauty and the generosity of the soul expressed through movement. I try to distil that essence in every ballet I do."

Corder has been a part of the Royal Ballet family ever

since he started ballet classes there as a child. His first choreographic commission for Covent Garden, *L'Invitation au voyage*, was nominated for an Olivier Award and in the mid-1980s he went on to collaborate with the distinguished painters Patrick Caulfield and Helen Frankenthaler.

But, following a run-in with Frankenthaler's lawyers over costume designs that Corder wanted replaced, his profes-

sional standing collapsed. "The whole thing blew up in all our faces. I was not treated properly, but I survived."

**N**ow he has come full circle and is back with the Royal Ballet for the first time in 14 years. "That whole mess is finished. You don't forget, but it's important to move on."

Corder is impressed by the current atmosphere at the Royal. "It's a hive of activity at the moment. In my own rehearsals, at least, there is a feeling of optimism. It had all been bumping along the bottom but is now on the way up. Returning to Covent Garden is enormously exciting, a catalyst for

a new beginning for the company. Finally, everyone can see that there is light at the end of the tunnel."

*Masquerade* stars three of the Royal's top ballerinas: Viviana Durante, Miyako Yoshida and Leanne Benjamin. "It has been a joy to work with such fabulous dancers. Their technical expertise, their musicality and their ability to know how to work is wonderful."

"I've got more and more Classical as I've got older," Corder adds, when asked to assess his style. "I hope I am upholding a tradition, that I am part of a lineage. That is what I am aspiring to."

"*Yesthe Classical language is always changing, but there is a lineage. You need those*

building blocks. I am not interested in being cutting edge because this year's cutting edge is often next year's passé. Of course I understand that Classical ballet is a branch of show business, but I really think it's important not to dumb down. Any layman can be touched by the power of Classical ballet if the passion, clarity, form and structure are communicated."

"It is not just about me trying to have a terrific career," he adds. "I believe passionately in the uplifting qualities of Classical dance, and in having a good time in the theatre."

● *Dance Bites* is at the Theatre Royal, Bath, tonight; a second *Dance Bites* tour is at the Civic Theatre, Darlington, tonight. Tel: 0171-212 9256 for full tour details.

## Secrets and sulphur

**L**ondon's Spring Loaded festival of contemporary dance turned the spotlight on two emerging British choreographers last week. Charles Linchuan, who last year won the £17,000 Jerwood Award for Young Choreographers, makes a quiet statement with his gentle and unassuming dances. Wayne McGregor, on the other hand, makes a big noise in his mission to prove that dance and technology are great partners.

Linchuan's modest programme (at The Place) was a triple bill of secretive and inward-looking pieces. *Number Stations*, a danced semaphore set to short-wave recordings of various intelligence agencies, is a curiosity — and mildly interesting — while *The Secret*, a quartet set to cheesy Hawaiian melodies, is a demure little number that plays with the audience by constantly diverting attention from itself.

The most ambitious item on the bill was *Preludes and Figures*, set to a piano score by Shostakovich (played live by Marko Martin). A dance for three, it amounts to choreo-

### LONDON DANCE ROUND UP

graphic small talk, its argument the product of a rather languid intellect.

McGregor's offering, *Sulphur 16*, is a hyperactive 70 minutes of strange and slippery dances for his Random Dance Company (at the Queen Elizabeth Hall) that are as volatile as volcanoes. His 16 darting fragments of dance (each just over four minutes) *throw out the oddest shapes and most illogical phrases*.

*Sulphur 16* is the second (the first was *The Millennium*) in a trilogy devoted to exploring the dance potential of new technologies. McGregor's choreography has been devised with the aid of the computer-animation programme Poser and with digital video material which was played in reverse "to give an alternative view of the architecture of the movement". DVD, thermal-imaging cameras and God knows what else went into the soup.

Whatever its genesis, the choreography does seem to reach parts of the body other choreographies don't.

McGregor's movement language is restless and unresolved: the dancers give the impression of people tormented by insects. The constant paradoxes in the writing have the effect of disembodiment the dancers and as you watch them jab, stab and annoy the performing space you do wonder at the why of it all.

At 70 minutes, the frenzy of body-shocking currents begins to read like an exercise in choreography. The music (credit: Zoviet France) — a more or less constant drone — is a dead zone which only increases the monotony.

Yet McGregor is amazingly inventive and energetic, and he is clearly on to something with this technology business. All he needs now is to harness his enthusiasm for all things digital to a more cohesive dance statement.

DEBRA CRANE

Bit of beet

## A knight to remember

### OPERA

calling in a memorable third act of gossamer delights. Phillips found his best touches for the Windsor scenes with a set that could also do service for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. But it was Terfel's night.

Despite his bulk, Terfel's Falstaff has a spring-heeled lightness of touch that suggests the former ducal page-

boy could have had a courtly bearing if he had spent less time on the sauce. The knight "in full summer bloom" appears, in these hands, to be just that in the first three acts and it is to Terfel's credit that the autumnal tints stop short of November. His voice, rich, deep, and flexible, is an magnificent instrument. As a vocal treat and an exercise in stage craft, it was a knockout and it is coming to London later this year. Lucky old London.

MICHAEL HENDERSON

**I**n just another six months *Goethe* will be 250 years old and, if the ensuing celebrations run true to form, we shall be treated to exhibitions of *Goethe in His Time*, *Goethe in Our Time*, *Goethe for All Time*, some of which will be exciting and some not. But already, one thing is certain. No tribute will be as boring as the dire production by Michael Chase's Mask Studio, based upon a time when alchemy interested him.

My ears wax over when earnest folk seek to interest me in the gobbledegook of *severato*, *conjunctio*, *coagulatio* and the other alchemical processes, climaxing in the "Royal Marriage", when yummy transformations are supposed to occur and love unites all. But disbelief can always be suspended if the alchemical context is right.

The original *Goethe* I have seen only in a numbing 19th-century translation, but an adaptation could perhaps be made. In *Yeastain Noh*-play mode, of the story's mysterious elements: the river crossed by the ferryman who

must be paid, the snake that swallows the gold, the exiled prince, the lily whose touch kills, the temple rising from the waters, the wonderful bridge. Suitably distilled for the stage, we might see all this as an image of personal growth, acceptance of opposition and the like, it might even look pretty.

But what Chase and his writer, Michael Burton, have chosen to do, with fatal consequences, is interlard the *Goethe* episodes with scenes of their own. The idea is to bring relevance and show that alchemical principles can inspire us in our modern world. Thus we have a group of travellers stranded at a neglected railway station waiting for the delayed midnight train. "The train won't come till you're ready for it," observes the porter, smiling under his woolly cap. And indeed, on

seven occasions their 36-hour wait is interrupted by intrusions of *Goethe*, where the businessman becomes a moping prince, the prostitute turns into the lily, the lady clinging to her porcelain figures becomes the green snake and so forth.

The clogging banality of the writing in these modern scenes will be hard to convey. Just one example — the porcelain lady (named Beatrice, oh dear) remarks: "Holes appear in life and I am beckoned by nothingness." There are masks, as you would expect from the company's name, which will not persuade sceptics of the value of this genre. Chase's idea of the importance of movement seems primitive — swaying in unison, that sort of thing.

I liked the Ferryman's rowing, and the names of the lovers, Anna Wymynczak and Mahatma van der Stoel. I liked the four gongs, although their notes (D, G and so on) pencilled across the front of them. I liked nothing else at all.

JEREMY KINGSTON

## Goethe turns to lead

### THEATRE

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JEREMY KINGSTON

THE TIMES

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**T**his week *The Times* has teamed up with 20th Century Fox to offer readers the chance to see an exclusive preview screening of *Waking Ned* on Sunday morning, March 14 (exact times will be on the ticket). The film, a raucous modern fairy tale, was a surprise hit at the Cannes Film Festival and won rave reviews when it opened in America at Christmas. Inspired by a true story, *Waking Ned* follows the comic exploits of two friends as they stumble into a lottery scam of hilarious proportions.

For a FREE ticket, which admits two, collect five differently numbered tokens, attach them to the completed voucher right and present them at the cinema box office of your choice, from those listed below. Tickets will be issued on a first-come first-served basis between March 4 and 13. *Waking Ned* opens nationwide on March 19.

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■ POP

Do Gene have legs?

# Rolling with the punch lines

**COMEDY:** Adam Bloom's diversions down the weirder byways of his mind turn small jokes into big ones, says Clive Davis

**T**he mercurial lyrics of *Twisted*, the boppers' psychopathology anthem, uncold from the speakers before both halves of Adam Bloom's show at the Bloomsbury Theatre. An apt choice, Bloom's verbal flourishes can be every bit as intricate — and as reworded.

The man is his own best heckler, constantly interrupting his own chain of thought with one well-timed digression after another before slowly edging back to his original theme. The jokes often start out small but soon gather momentum. Reflections on a faulty ballpoint pen lead seamlessly into a cheeky bit of pantomime about the status of women in Saudi marriages. To explain the connection would take up a whole column. Trust me, therefore, that there is a weird logic at work.

Now in the middle of a lengthy solo tour, the London comic walked off with a People's Choice award at the Edinburgh Festival last year. His audience becomes very much part of his act: at one point he jumps off the stage and turns the stalls into his own Speaker's Corner. A spontaneous approach, however, does not always work miracles, especially when stretched across two sets. Exchanging banter with an American, he could not help falling back on tired gags at foreign tourists who mispronounce Leicester Square.

The general level of inspiration dipped markedly after the interval. Bloom's deconstructionist tendencies, never that far from the surface, tended to undercut the punch lines. "I'm not funny any more, am I?" he asked at one stage. Spoken in jest, but a dangerous question all the same. Obsessed with the nuts and bolts of rais-

ing laughter, he risked being mistaken for the over-clever narrator of a Martin Amis novel. His finale — a comedy version of those kitch transatlantic guides to the secrets of the magicians' trade — only served to draw attention to the fact, to the fact, that the jokes were not quite strong enough in the first place.

But the rest of the evening had been an engaging blend of the cerebral and the everyday. He has the intelligence of an academic and the instincts of a pub-quiz contestant. A Lad lurks in there, too, though, and he is generally kept on a tight leash.

Bloom wears his Jewishness lightly, mulling over his relationship with a mother who is still capable of sending a Valentine's card. Death can suddenly beat its wings in the air, but he assures moments of existential dread with the thought that God, far from being omnipotent, may be a constant struggling against the clock on *The Generation Game*.

Schooldays provided another recurrent theme as he recalled the humiliation of being outshone by the class genius. He's very good, too, at catching the elusive instant when childhood's blind optimism starts to give way to reality. The boy leaps at an invitation to a party; the adult starts fretting about how few people he will know there.

The adroitness within had its opportunity to shine when, for no very obvious reason, he challenged himself to a duel with a Rubik's Cube. He won; his fingers spinning in all directions.

By now the music had switched to The Who's *Pinball Wizard* — the perfect soundtrack to accompany a pinball mind.

**He is his own best heckler, disrupting his chain of thought?**



Full bloom: Adam Bloom combines 'the intelligence of an academic with the instincts of a pub-quiz contestant'

## Bit of beef on the bone

POP

the group's standard four-piece to good effect. A pity, perhaps, the song that followed his introduction was *Where Are They Now?*

Gene may have a decade or so on him, but they do a better job in melancholy than boisterousness. Lead singer Martin Rosser remains a debonair if downbeat frontman, and there was much to enjoy in new songs such as *Mayday* and *Something in the Water*.

The most vociferous response was for *Speak to Me*. Someone, the smash-that-never-was from their last album, *Drawn to the Deep End*. That compelling ballad represented the big idea that could have projected Gene beyond their own constituency. Home support remains robust, but without the element of surprise, their window of wider opportunity now seems just a faint light.

Not that many of the semi-filled audience were old enough to remember. "He looks about 40," said one. Guilty as charged: Talbot is indeed 40, and called on his wide experience to augment

PAUL SEXTON

kinship with the former Smith, but while the fey vulnerability of some of Gene's early songs betrays that lineage, they have developed a more solid backbone. The piano music of *You'll Never Walk Again*, the last song on *Revelations*, heralded their arrival, as the curtain lifted to reveal that the tune was being picked out by Mick Talbot, once Paul Weller's ivory-thinker in the Style Council.

Not that many of the

semi-filled audience were old

enough to remember. "He looks about 40," said one. Guilty as charged: Talbot is indeed 40, and called on his wide experience to augment

THE Finnish musician Jimi Tenor is said to have arrived on stage at recent gigs atop a white stallion and sporting a foil silver cape. His entrance at London's Improv — a comedy club too small to accommodate a horse — was low-key in comparison, but striking nevertheless. Wearing a sequined, electric-blue suit, 1970s-style shades and an oddly-shaped, sparkly hat draped in yards of pink chiffon, he took his place behind a Hammond organ to the sound of funky house-beats and a squawking saxophone.

An enigmatic musical misfit, Tenor — whose real name is Lassi Lehto — single-handedly writes, arranges and records distinctive songs which mix mid-tempo techno, modern jazz and loungecore with 1970s funk, film noir and Enya-esque electro effects. Also an artist, he has been a cult figure at home and abroad since the release two years ago of his first album, *Interview*. Playing a one-off British gig to promote its follow-up, *Organism*, launched last week, Tenor attracted a capacity

audience to sing into a microphone which distorted his aural vocals or layered them in echo. Sometimes George Benson, sometimes David Byrne. When he whispered, he could have been Jarvis Cocker. Mostly, though, he sounded like a Duke.

Backed by a three-piece brass section, a keyboardist and a bassist, Tenor breezed through about a dozen songs chosen from both his albums. Highlights included the *Organism* opener *Total Devastation*, which had the enrobed audience dancing, and the early single *Sugar Daddy*, which closed the show to rapturous applause. Unusually subdued, Tenor — who had exchanged his flashy suit for jeans — simply sauntered offstage, ignoring calls for an encore.

During the performance, he had drunk glass after glass of champagne, served to him on a silver tray by a glamorous girl. Perhaps the alcohol had gone straight to his head.

LISA VERRICO

## Lassi let off the leash

**Jimi Tenor**  
Improv, W1

crowd of scruffy students, trendy twentysomethings and conservative couples, a strange sight even by his own high standards.

The show opened with *Year of the Apocalypse*, originally recorded with a Finnish choir and due out soon as *Organism*'s first single. Throughout the misleadingly titled track — an upbeat, infectious fusion of jazz, Funkadelic-like grooves and lyrics about celebrating life — Tenor stayed seated at the organ. The following hour of so, however, saw him frequently stroll to centre stage to sing into a microphone which distorted his aural vocals or layered them in echo. Sometimes George Benson, sometimes David Byrne. When he whispered, he could have been Jarvis Cocker. Mostly, though, he sounded like a Duke.

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LISA VERRICO

## RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marti Hargre

**THE RETURN OF DON JUAN:** World première of Kim Brandstrup's updated version of the classic title with a new score by Kim Huelweg. Former Royal Ballet star Ira Mukhametov joins the Royal Danish Company in the role of the notorious Don. Sadler's Wells (0171-713 6000). Tonight, 7.30pm. (5)

**THREE DAYS OF RAIN:** Elizabeth McGovern heads the cast of Richard Greenberg's play, greatly Reed at the Royal Shakespeare Club last year. Robin Lester directs this journey back to 1980. Donmar Warehouse (0171-369 1732). (2) Open tonight, 7pm.

**SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW:** The eccentric Russian clown returns to bring his brand of mayhem as well as Angels de Castro, and his unforgettable finale. Piccadilly (0171-369 1734). Open tonight, 7pm.

**THE TSARINA'S SHIPWRECK:** The last of the three plays in Macbeth's another rare operatic gem. Tchaikovsky's colourful title, directed by Stephen Meersell, is a co-production with the London Contemporary Dance Company. Sadler's Wells (0171-638 8881). Open tonight, 7.30pm.

**TANGOR:** The earthy sounds of Astor Piazzolla can be savoured as Latvian violin virtuoso Gidon Kremer gets to grips with the great Argentinian tango master. Queen Elizabeth Hall (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.45pm. (5)

**NOTTINGHAM:** Northern Ballet Theatre's modern take on Carmen. Both a taste of local attraction makes its first stop on the company's current UK tour.

**STRATFORD-UPON-AVON:** Four children isolated since birth are brought together to see what happens. Neil Levenson directs *Swan's Cold Heart*. The Other Place (01752 256283). (5) Open tonight, 7pm.

**GLASGOW:** The late Sarah Kane's controversial *Phaedra's Love* radically



Ira Mukhametov dances at Sadler's Wells

and brutally rewrites the classical myth. Peter Macvean directs *Ghost Lover*. For the strong of stomach only. Citizens (0141-299 0028). Open tonight, 7.30pm.

**NOTRE DAME DE PARIS:** The last of the three plays in Macbeth's another rare operatic gem. Tchaikovsky's colourful title, directed by Stephen Meersell, is a co-production with the London Contemporary Dance Company. Sadler's Wells (0171-638 8881). Open tonight, 7pm.

**SHOCKED:** Peter's Wonderful simile show by the Cultural Industry team with the Tiger Lillies and Martyn Jacques' *La Jalousie scratch*. Lyric (0161-749 2311). (5)

**OKLAHOMA:** National Theatre of Norway's *Okahoma!* and Hammerfest's *Okahoma!* stage debuts in Neil Simon's 1971

**NEW WEST END SHOWS**

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

**■ HOUSE full, return only □ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices**

**■ BAREFOOT IN CHIC:** Fascinating. Aids play from a month before setting off on their latest national tour. This time Clarke Peters directs. Royal, Haymarket (0171-652 6900). (5)

**■ TALK OF THE CITY:** Stephen Poliakov's potentially bawdy play about BBC censorship in the 1930s. With a cast including a charming Angie Wright. Young Vic (0171-928 6363). (5)

**■ THE FOREST:** Alan Ayckbourn adapts Colm Tóibín's sardonic 1970s comedy, with Michael Feast's enveloping actor implying his own native Francis as a Toad. Lyric (0171-928 6367). (5)

**■ MURKIN:** Paul Dini's *Englishman and Paddy*. Two Irish micks in Kilburn fall in with some hard men. Anthony Clark's Birmingham Rep production comes here. Threycote (0161-928 1000). (5)

**■ THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE:** Richard Dreyfuss and Martin Short's *Second Avenue* stage debut in Neil Simon's 1971

comedy, not seen here till now. Richmond (0181-240 0080). (5)

**■ A DUOLINE:** Star of the Gate's new *Two Gentlemen of Verona*'s

new adaptation of *Cavendish*, directed by Monica Montebello. Gate Theatre (0171-229 0705). (5)

**■ THE GREEN SNAKE:** Meek Studio's interpretation of Goethe's *Die Zauberflöte*. The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lizard, with puppets and, of course, masks. Riverside Studios (0181-237 1111). (5)

**■ THE NUNNALS:** Irish all-girl satirical singing trio bring harmony, irony and a sharp look at humanity. Dublin (0171-637 2070). (5)

**■ SHOCKED:** Peter's Wonderful simile show by the Cultural Industry team with the Tiger Lillies and Martyn Jacques' *La Jalousie scratch*. Lyric (0161-749 2311). (5)

**■ OKLAHOMA:** National Theatre of Norway's *Okahoma!* and Hammerfest's *Okahoma!* stage debuts in Neil Simon's 1971

**FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE**

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

## NEW RELEASES

**THE THIN RED LINE** (15): A stirring coming-of-age tale of American soldiers lost their sanity in the Pacific during the Second World War. Terrence Malick's first film for 20 years is an arthouse masterpiece. Sean Penn, Jim Caviezel, Ben Chaplin, Nick Nolte.

**YOU'VE GOT MAIL** (PG): Buttered-up rom-com from the *Notting Hill* team. Marks and Mandy Ryan who fall in love on the Internet. Written and directed by Nora Ephron.

**PAINTED ANGELS** (15): Bleak, grimy piece about the prostitutes who serviced the ironworkers of the Wild West. A joyless film from the director of *Requiem for a Dream*. Jim Jarmusch.

**TITANIC TOWN** (15): Julie Waters' playful spin-off as a pugnacious Catholic housewife in this grim review of Northern Ireland's Troubles. *Titanic Town* (1972). Roger Michell directs.

**PERDITA DOYLE** (15): Rosalie Perez and Jason Isaacs star in this gripping drama from the *Notting Hill* team up to sell their products on a shopping channel. Director Stephen Herek rigs some rather less neatly than his big name stars.

**LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL** (PG): Eddie Murphy's romantic Second World War comedy is a joyous reminder that into the Holocaust, *Schindler's List* aside, but the comic treatment of the struggle to survive in a death camp is at best

through an American campus with the help of a migrant-inducing actress.

## CURRENT

**AFFLCTION** (15): Paul Schrader's brooding portrait of a fractured family. Nick Nolte and James Coburn put in powerful performances as father and son caught in a cycle of male violence.

**THIS YEAR'S LOVE** (18): David Kane's buzzy comedy charts the rise of Canadian town media make of it to become junk food stars. With Kathy Bates, Jerry Hanks, Scott Cuthbert, McCormick and Ian Hart.

**HOLY MAN** (PG): Eddie Murphy's naive spiritual guru and Jeff Bridges' sly, scheming guru team up to sell their products on a shopping channel. Director Stephen Herek rigs some rather less neatly than his big name stars.

**LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL** (PG): Eddie Murphy's romantic Second World War comedy is a joyous reminder that into the Holocaust, *Schindler's List* aside, but the comic treatment of the struggle to survive in a death camp is at best

through an American campus with the help of a migrant-inducing actress.

**RENT**

**IT'S THE HOTTEST PROPERTY IN TOWN** (NOT)

Mon-Sat 8pm, Sun 8.30pm, Sat 3pm

**NOW BOOKING TO 2000**

**THE MEMORY OF WATER**

By Sholeh Sheppard

Directed by Terry Johnson

**THEATRE** (PG)

Mon-Sat 8pm, Sun 8.30pm

**CONCERTS**

**Steve Earle and the Del McCoury Band**

With special guest

**Steve Earle**

# The Tories, on a hiding to nothing

Labour's last landslide was only a start, predicts Gerald Kaufman

**S**traw in the doghouse (say some), Cook and Lloyd in trouble with the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. Fears about GM foods, cut Labour's opinion poll lead. Yet that lead is still far higher than on election day in May 1997. And Tony Blair's phenomenal popularity endures, while that of William Hague explores previously unknown depths.

"All," say the wiseacres (as they have been saying since Blair succeeded as Labour leader in 1994), "it can't last." Mid-term blues are sure to set in, the Tories will recover support and, even if Labour wins the next election, it will be with a reduced majority.

Really? Why? We are in mid-term already, with a general election quite likely the year after next. Although the Government still seems brand new, it has been in office for a year and ten months. Yet, although some of its ratings have been denied by recent controversies, its predominance over the Conservatives continues, with the Liberal Democrats as almost irrelevant also-rans. All the objective evidence points to a landslide even greater than that of 1997.

In 1997 I told Tony Blair he would obtain at least 400 Labour MPs, and he did not believe me, expecting a majority of about 50. Yet not only the opinion polls but canvassing evidence pointed to an enormous Labour win. Sir John Goss believed me sufficiently to put money on his Labour opponent gaining the Hendon seat he had held for 27 years; he won his bet.

So indeed was the Labour Party's culture of defeat that even senior members could not bring themselves to credit the possibility of the historic win they went on to achieve. Similarly, despite the 1997 landslide and the continuing popularity of the Government, some ministers gaze at me as if I were mad when I assure them that the party will gain seats at the next election.

Yet the likelihood of such a victory is obvious. For anyone with eyes to see, the entire British political landscape has been transformed. From 1945 to 1997, inclusive, that landscape was easily discernible. On the left was Labour. On the right were the Tories. In between were the Liberals, or whatever they happened to be calling themselves at the time, bestowing their fickle favours.

Now, however, the Liberal Democrats have become the left-wing party, taking over from the discredited and impotent hard-Left remnant inside the Parliamentary Labour Party. The advocacy of increased social spending and increased taxes to pay for it. If that profligate attitude were alone insufficient to make alliance with the Tories impossible, the Lib Dems' extreme pro-Europeanism makes any association with the Eurosceptic Conservative leadership inconceivable.

The Lib Dems are now, despite their increased Commons representation, a Parliamentary appendage of new Labour. One Lib Dem MP complained to me: "The La-

**Ambitious  
Tory MPs  
should  
consider  
a new  
career**

The author is Labour MP for Manchester Gorton  
comment@the-times.co.uk

**'The Internet is not all listed buildings and photos of roses and**

**Prince William — 90 per cent of Internet traffic is devoted to pornography'**

Richard Tyrrell

Watch them on the Web. Clip your toenails? Do it in front of a webcam on your PC, so others can share the experience.

Few indeed are the Luddite voices speaking out against the Internet. I know of a few old novelists and poets — all over 50 — who still write their books with pen and ink (extracts can usually be read on the Web). There are many elderly people who don't know what Microsoft Explorer is. That's OK. There are plenty of Web tutorials.

But perhaps it is time to remind ourselves that all is not right with the Internet. The technology is fine, but is the public mature enough for 100 per cent access to what amounts to a free-for-all? Aren't there social issues surrounding the content of the Internet? Do we know what its effects will be?

Let us remember that the Internet is not all listed buildings

and photos of roses and Prince William. According to my *Rough Guide to the Internet*, 1999 edition, 90 per cent of Internet traffic is devoted to pornography. A great many men buy PCs and worse — webcams are primarily for sexual gratification.

Anyone who has logged on to the family zone of Microsoft NetMeeting, as I have, and found themselves chatting to somebody named "Hairy Hound" (who has sat for two hours in front of his PC in his underwear), will quickly recognise that the Net is the natural home of voyeurs.

It is also, far more seriously, the natural home of child pornographers and extremists. Child pornographers are clever enough to stay one step ahead of the police by setting up their

services in countries with poor law enforcement — Iran, or Russia. A favourite ruse is to attach their wares to legal porn sites by means of the serial link — that is, when you click on an icon your PC automatically opens up a haze of other Web sites. Among these will be the bestiality, rape, or child-abuse site. Suckers foolish enough to stray into this territory — from curiosity or rebelliousness — are likely to find themselves carrying the mental scars for a long time.

**S**imilarly, it is simply to link to pages of political hate groups. The ideas of neo Nazis or white supremacists look comic in the cold light of day. And they would be, were it not that these people are organised, and still finding recruits. What

those recruits do is a secret only the initiated know. Yaron Svoray, who wrote a book on European neo-Nazism, described his own initial initiation included being guest of honour at a snuff movie and having a gun held jokingly to his head. Neo-Nazis, such as the group surrounding the sinister Friedhelm Blisse in Germany, are quite frank about their plans to become "respectable". To build links with established right-wing groups, to gain credibility, as the far Right has done in France, and to come out as full-blown Nazis only when the time is right. With limited resources, the surest way of spreading the word is on a free, worldwide media.

Seth Warshavsky, a 25-year-old porn millionaire, has claimed that the Internet is normalising porn. It may well normalise hate, too. It may normalise a lot of things that are not socially

desirable. It is already encouraging onanism and rapidly outstripping the popularity of phone sex. Most Web users are capable of leading routine, well-balanced lives (even if they do a bit of naughty surfing). It is the lonely, whose only outlet is their imagination, who are more at risk. In their search for the new image, the virtual friend, the fresh idea, the more risqué photo, one can see the fault-lines where child pornography or political extremism may find a convert.

So while the Cyber Age is still in the ascendant, let's have pause for thought. The Internet is a place of creativity but no poetry, of high ideals and low instincts. If we embrace it and praise it unquestioningly, we collude with its child abusers and haters. A great deal of work remains to be done on its dimly lit zones.

comment@the-times.co.uk



## The love of Mike

DIANE ABBOTT starred with Michael Portillo and played the Tory's wife in a school play, I have learnt. The lefty MP was at Harrow County Girls' while Portillo, both pictured, was at the boys' school. The production also saw a buccaneering Clive Anderson. Hitherto, Jonathan Aitken, godfather to Diane's son, was believed to be the only dashing right-winger she would let near her balcony.

"I also offered her Lady Macduff in my *Macbeth* film," says Portillo. "Sadly, the jumbies failed to raise enough finance." Some say she also played Juliet to Michael's Romeo, but she slams this as "FO smears" (she has been pestering about arms to Africa). "I did play opposite Portillo — but not as his lover."



A KUWAITI prince popped into Heathrow's duty-free for a spot of therapy recently. He spent £500 on 49 bottles each of cognac, gin and whisky, having them wrapped in cigarette boxes — to "ease their passage" into the dry kingdom.

■ EGO overrode in Piccadilly, where Richard Branson's plan for a "mega-bar" has been blocked. His "giant entertainment centre" was to join Oliver Peyton's Atlantic Bar and Marco Pierre White's Tropicana in the gloomy Regent Palace Hotel.

Branson hoped to set up a series of private "lounges" (oh dear) but planners might be worried about the flurry of wits Peyton has issued against other caterers on the site, claiming he is solely entitled to trade there.

■ BATTERED ministers moan that Sir William Macpherson of Cluny has had an easy ride from the race lobby, despite his bracing immigration record: "He was the kind of judge," jokes a minister, "who would decide a case by asking 'smoking or non-smoking' and send the blighter back on the next plane." Bunkum, I'm sure.

■ THE dodgy general set to rule Nigeria learnt his trade from Ken Livingstone and his GLC cronies. Olusegun Obasanjo, whose "victory" has been questioned amid churlish vote-rigging claims, was chums with Illyd Harrington, Ken's deputy during his reign in London. "He helped me with the Buddhist peace pagoda in Battersea," says Illyd. "He was strangely keen to help." I trust he did not try to teach Ken about ballot-rigging.

■ DONNISH scenes at Magdalen, Oxford. As swells rumbled towards dinner (to mark the opening of a new auditorium) a kerfuffle broke out over a gown between Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, Chancellor, and Lord Neill of Bladen. Finally, the latter grabbed it: "It's mine! It belonged to Harold Macmillan."



■ LORD SALISBURY was a greater Tory PM than Disraeli, a forthcoming biography by Andrew Roberts will claim. The fashionable historian argues in an early proof that the peer was even more Machiavellian in clambering up the greasy pole. Roger Scruton agrees: "Salisbury was the most successful PM we have had because we know nothing about him," says the editor of the *Salisbury Review*. "He left the country as he had found it, the ideal politician. If it required cunning and intrigue, so be it. I admire Disraeli but he hardly left the world unnoticed." Such are the perverse criteria for being a Tory great.

SILLY claims that the BBC is in bed with Labour take a strange turn. No sooner than Lance Price leaves his slot as a Beeb toil to help Alastair Campbell stamp out dissent, but Bill Bush, the BBC's election chief, jumps in beside them working in the Strategic Communications Unit. Most rum.

JASPER GERARD



## CARE FREE

A Royal Commission of royal extravagance

days before the general election, Tony Blair accused the Conservative Government of forcing "thousands of pensioners to sell their homes to pay for long-term care". "Pensioners deserve better than this", Mr Blair stated. A Royal Commission promised to recommend how the rising cost of looking after an ageing nation might be met. After over a deliberation, its 12 members could be on a way forward. Yesterday the produced proposals which, in tackling the core problems, would limit future governments to public expenditure. Only two dissenting from these old Labour to trust the State argued that to this core problem lies private, not public, hands. They should on this occasion listen minority.

of the current system are who have been prudent for old age, and whose £16,000, are not entitled to pay for care in nursing or res. As a result, every year, pensioners have to sell their "heir sense of injustice is the lottery of illness: a patient with cancer is the NHS, while nursing patient with Alzheimer's

pathy and willingness to problems is tempered by the of doing so. Already, long the State about £7 billion a he system is changed, ush and bills will rise growing proportion of 2031, about one in five of will be over retirement age. conundrum, the majority of pensioners did indeed think the ut in the way that the intended. Its proposal that d fund the care and social and residential homes payers over £6 billion by the unthinkable.

## HOPE FOR NIGERIA

clear election result but a clouded future

have been accusations ofars of independence, there in a single fair or clean Nigeria. But despite the European and American clear that Olusegun former military ruler, was wing winner as the next n. even if all fraudulent. His victory is a rare in a country that has democracy, almost no good is seen as one of the most world. He takes office in a Herculean challenge to African equivalent of the

up to the task. A gruff who won distinction as a nander, he has a national goes beyond tribal alleys of domination by the of the few southerners who country. He is less popular in his heartland than in other that is a measure of his not to allow the old traditional partiality to cloud his appointments. Three years criticising the military have itation for decency. A job is to keep Nigeria's air barracks and root out abused their position. This of the clique around Sani military dictator, made though the plunder of the alth and the manipulation of exchange and import regulations.

## BRING BACK MR CHIPS

re teachers have much to add to their profession

ke a maths teacher to work uation does not balance: in Wales some 8,000 teachers seeking work in schools: ssrooms all over Britain are sp with serious shortages of something is not adding up ach-touted education policy. profession has long been a mment concern. Excessive ng hours and disruptive attributed to a steady decline t figures. Low pay leads to m. And where unruly chil sidered a disruption on the es. Britain's teachers have e flat. And so, in an effort to tarnished image of teaching, ent has pieced together a £130 age of measures intended to candidates to the profession. The cinema's "nobody forgets a ner" campaign which added re. A Green Paper on the future g. published at the end of last posed "golden hellos" worth science teachers and performed pay measures which would ares up from a pittance to five rates. et, even as government money is tempting new teachers, a jobseeker's wage is paid out to thousands of

2051. Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, has wisely kicked this into the long grass of public debate. No amount of government spending is likely to satisfy the public's expectations of what the State should provide. Such an explosion in expenditure would do little to help the less well-off, whose care bills the State already covers, but might provoke a rise in demand for free care and deter people from taking out private insurance. If they want help with their living costs, elderly people will still be means-tested; so some might still need to sell their homes. Overall, the chances are that a future government would abolish such a scheme, unable to meet spiralling costs without hefty rises in taxation.

Fortunately, two members of the committee, David Lipsey and Joel Joffe, were not tempted to follow their colleagues into this high-spending nirvana. Their minority report is predicated on the more realistic notion that the State cannot — and should not — promise to pay for all the costs of long-term care. Dissent has produced some imaginative ideas. For example, they suggest a state-sponsored scheme to enable elderly people to borrow against the value of their home to fund care. Mr Lipsey proposes that no one should have to fund their care in a residential or nursing home for more than four years, making it easier for people to save or insure for their future.

Commonsense schemes like these would create new incentives for people to take care of themselves. Yet such tinkering amounts to a nudge in the direction of the private sector, when a forceful push is required. Across Europe, governments face the same dilemma of how diminishing workforces might support the growing band of elderly people in the next millennium. The Government is right to be cool towards the majority report's solution, which would help to bankrupt the nation. But the existing unfair, antiquated system is bankrupting thousands of prudent pensioners. The ball is once more back in the Government's court to think the unthinkable.

**Gulf War illness**

From Mr Howard Fienberg

Sir, We do best to look past Colonel T. H. English's call to the British Government for an inquiry on Gulf War illness (letter, February 18).

I have seen no evidence that Gulf War veterans are "affected significantly more often by disorders of unknown cause". Evidence demonstrates that some Gulf War veterans are ill. Full stop.

The health studies published in January in *The Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal* simply bolster the conclusions of dozens of studies in Canada and the US — the great number of different symptoms and possible causes offer no evidence of an all-encompassing syndrome. Self-selected cases and self-reported symptoms rather than clinical diagnoses hamper most of the research that has pointed to a syndrome.

This is not to question whether or

## Schools and the Lawrence inquiry

From Professor Bernard Crick

Sir, Your leading article today is wise and forceful to argue against the Macpherson report's recommendation of an annual publication of school-by-school lists of "racist incidents" and ethnic (which is a better word) identifications of pupils excluded.

This would almost certainly be counter-productive and a measure, not of professional competence in difficult and delicate situations, but of the social, ethnic and religious composition of neighbourhoods.

However, the idea that the curriculum should be amended "in order better to reflect the needs of a diverse society" is not so out of line with the recommendations of the advisory group on The Teaching of Citizenship and Democracy in Schools that I had the honour to chair (1997-98), so long as ethnic relations are part of a broader programme of citizenship learning. We said, for instance,

... a main aim for the whole community should be to find or restore a sense of common citizenship that is secure enough to find a place for the plurality of nations, cultures and ethnic identifications and religions long found in the United Kingdom.

Many of our precise learning "targets" are relevant to this good purpose.

Yours sincerely,  
BERNARD CRICK,  
8a Bellevue Terrace,  
Edinburgh EH7 4DT.  
February 26.

From Commander Michael Saunders Watson

Sir, The Macpherson report recommends that the national curriculum should be amended "better to reflect the needs of a diverse society". When the National Curriculum History Working Group was set up in 1989 we were instructed to put British history at the core of our recommendations and, inter alia, to address the question of what history should be taught to the ethnic minorities.

In the case of the former we took account of the histories of the four countries which make up the UK, and from which as a multicultural society it draws its strength. For instance in the area of human rights, we gave weight both to the Declaration of Arbroath in Scotland and to Magna Carta in England.

In the course of our work we visited a number of schools with pupils from many ethnic backgrounds. One, I recall, included pupils speaking over 50 national languages. Their teachers were adamant that they should be taught the history of the country of their adoption. To do otherwise would, they felt, not only be impractical but divisive.

While our recommended course of history therefore focused on Britain, we did include study units relating to areas of the world from which many of these pupils originated.

Sadly, other pressures have intervened to reduce both the content and amount of history being taught in schools.

I trust, however, that the essential features of British history, based on a tolerant acceptance of the many cultures of its people over time, will remain and in due course benefit from the invigorating effect which those from foreign shores bring to our islands. This must be the right way forward.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL SAUNDERS WATSON  
(Chairman, National Curriculum History Working Group, 1988-90),  
Rockingham Castle,  
Market Harborough,  
Leicestershire LE16 8TH.  
March 1.

From Mr Rex Walford and Ms Christine Counsell

Sir, You urge circumspection in any amendment to the national curriculum in the light of the recommendations of the Lawrence report. We agree.

Giving all young people a thorough and enlightened understanding of our nation's multicultural past and of the diversity of the world's peoples is surely the basis of future racial harmony in Britain. Our best history and geography teachers foster wide knowledge of these issues and critical engagement with them.

If the Secretary of State for Education would give as much attention to the teaching of geography and history as he does the so-called "core" subjects (especially by supporting them, rather than marginalising them, in the Key years of 14 to 16, at Key Stage 4) much could be achieved in advancing both relevant knowledge and positive attitudes in a multicultural Britain.

Yours sincerely,  
REX WALFORD  
(Geographer),  
CHRISTINE COUNSELL  
(Historian),  
School of Education,  
University of Cambridge,  
17 Trumpington Street,  
Cambridge CB2 1QA.  
e-mail to: [gc210@hermes.cam.ac.uk](mailto:gc210@hermes.cam.ac.uk)  
February 26.

Letters to the Editor that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: [letters@the-times.co.uk](mailto:letters@the-times.co.uk)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Debate over royalties on art works

From Mr Robert J. Waterhouse

Sir, The proposed *droit de suite* on art sales (report, February 22; leading article, February 25) — now, thankfully, put on hold by the EU (report, February 26) — would require that "art" be defined and a comprehensive system set up to monitor the sale of every "work of art", collect revenues and distribute them as appropriate.

Bearing in mind that most art has little commercial value, the cost of running a Europe-wide scheme would probably be greater than the revenue collected. No doubt the taxpayer will be expected to pay for the army of inspectors, administrators and accountants who would operate the scheme, presumably from some comfortable base in continental Europe.

It would be necessary for these officials to study the wills of all artists, and wills of their beneficiaries, in order to distribute the revenue correctly — a colossal undertaking and yet another intrusion of officialdom into the lives of Europe's citizens.

There can be no logical basis for treating the descendants of artists differently from the descendants of anyone else. It would be no more foolish to extend the scheme to cover the descendants of artists' models, who receive a pittance. And what about people whose property is included, without any payment, in a landscape picture? Shouldn't they get something out of all this too, since it is the image of their property that is being sold?

Only the European Union could waste its time on such nonsense.

Yours etc.,  
ROBERT J. WATERHOUSE,  
5 Heatherbank,  
Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5RE,  
February 26.

From the Chairman of the British Copyright Council

Sir, Congratulations on including, at last, the artists' side of the case for the *droit de suite* (report, February 22). This is long overdue (it is not a tax — since when did taxes go direct to private individuals?)

It has always been a matter of

### Gulf War illness

From Mr Jonathan Gestetner

Sir, What about works of art which sell at auction for less than the artist's original selling price (which happens far more frequently than the reverse)?

Would it not be as logical for the artist, or his estate, to participate in the next purchaser's loss as in his gain? Why should artists be rewarded on a "heads I win, tails you lose" basis?

Yours faithfully,  
JONATHAN GESTETNER,  
Marlborough Rare Books Ltd,  
144-146 New Bond Street, W1Y 9FD,  
February 25.

From Mr N. J. Inkley

Sir, Mr Porteous Wood makes an unjustified assumption which I believe invalidates his argument. He says that "retaining the English bishops [in the Lords] disadvantages the third of the population who do not believe". It might advantage Anglicans, but it need not disadvantage anyone. The presence of good men and true can benefit all.

Yours,  
NEIL INKLEY,  
6 Knoll Lane, Walton-le-Dale,  
Preston, Lancashire PR5 4BQ,  
February 22.

### Houdini's film releases

From Professor Emeritus Edwin A. Daves

Sir, *The Man from Beyond*, which you report (February 25) as being Harry Houdini's "one attempt to break into films", was not the only Houdini feature film (and, in fact, was not even available on video in the US for several years). He started with the serial, *The Master Mystery* (notable for bringing the first robot to the screen), and ended (in 1923) with *Haldane of the Secret Service*.

His last two films were produced by his own Houdini's Motion Picture Corporation, a venture in which he lost some \$500,000, for reasons which will be readily apparent when the restored *The Man from Beyond* is screened at this month's Bradford Film Festival.

Sadly, Houdini's talents as a great showman and escapist did not translate to the screen and, despite a fascinating Niagara Falls episode in *The Man from Beyond*, biographer Kenneth Silverman's observation that Houdini's acting in the film provided little more animation when his character was alive then when frozen to the ice tells all.

Yours faithfully,  
EDWIN A. DAVES  
(Historian, The Magic Circle,  
Dane Hill, 393 Beverley Road,  
Anlaby, East Yorkshire HU10 7BQ,  
March 1.

### Names and numbers

From Mr E. W. Lighton

Sir, Mr Harry Tate (letter, February 27; see also letters, February 22 and 25) tells us of the policy of the Australian State of Victoria, which allows drivers a wide personal choice of numberplate. He might have been puzzled and eventually amused, as I was, by the formation "OOO AAH" seen in Canberra last September.

A small notice in a side window contained the legend: "It may be your daughter on the back seat."

Yours etc.,  
E. W. LIGHTON,  
11 Ryebank Avenue,  
Crewe CW1 3SW,  
e-mail to: [a31755@infotrade.co.uk](mailto:a31755@infotrade.co.uk)  
February 27.

From Mr Alan Dale

Sir, Suppose that the system of vehicle registration had always been such that the owner's name or initial were compulsorily incorporated into the numberplate. Imagine the status to be gained by, and the cost of, bearing the system and acquiring an entirely anonymous plate consisting of meaningless letters and numbers.

Yours faithfully,  
ALAN DALE,  
Tangley Farm, Tangley,  
Andover, Hampshire SP11 ORZ,  
February 27.



## COURT CIRCULAR

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 1: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh gave a Reception this evening at Buckingham Palace for the winners of The Queen's Award for Export, Technological and Environmental Achievement in 1998. The Duke of Gloucester and The Duke of Kent were present.

**ST JAMES'S PALACE**  
March 1: The Prince of Wales today launched the Welsh Beef Promotion Campaign at the Celtic Manor Hotel Golf and Country Club, Newport, Gwent.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 1: The Duke of York this morning departed London Heathrow for Vietnam.

Captain Neil Blair, Royal Navy, and Mr David Tuck are in attendance.

### Today's royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh will visit the British Equestrian Trade Association International Fair at the NEC, Birmingham, at 11.15, and as first honorary liverymen will attend the Engineers' Company election court meeting and dinner at the City of London Club, Old Broad Street, EC2 at 7.15.

The Princess Royal, as president of Royal Housing Trust, will attend a conference at the Heritage Motor Museum, Banbury Road, Gaydon, Warwickshire, at 9.30; will officially open Arbury's new United Kingdom Headquarters at Tadbrook Park Drive, Warwick, at 2.00; and as president, British Horse Society will open the BHS Rescue Centre, Stonecroft Equestrian Centre, Stonecroft Farm, Kincoton Road, Arbury, at 3.20.

Princess Alexandra will attend a dinner to mark the 30th anniversary of her patronage of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, St James's Palace at 7.15.

**Lecture**  
CSV  
Lord Levy, Honorary President of CSV, presided at the 10th Annual Edith Kahn Memorial Lecture delivered by Denise Plat, CBE, Chief Inspector, Social Services Inspectorate, at William Kent House, Arlington Street, SW1, yesterday.

**Chartered Certified Accountants**  
The following two names were omitted from the list of successful finalists in the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants December 1998 examination published last Friday: Wood T D; Woodhead P.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 1: The Prince Edward today unveiled the Noel Coward statue at the Gershwin theatre, New York, United States of America.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 1: The Princess Royal this afternoon visited Bath University Sports Training Village, Bath, Somerset, and was met on arrival by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Somerset (Lady Gass).

**ST JAMES'S PALACE**  
March 1: The Duke of Kent, Colonel, this morning visited the Scots Guards Band, Wellington Barracks, London SW1.

**THATCHED HOUSE LODGE**

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 1: Princess Alexandra, President of the Friends of the V&A, this evening attended a Reception in the Italian Galleries of the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London.

### Mr Ferrier Charlton

A memorial service for Mr Ferrier Charlton will be held at St Clement Danes Church on Friday, March 26, at 11.00am.

### Premium Bonds

The £1 million prize in the Premium Bond draw for March was won with bond number 765274. The winner lives in Lancashire and has a holding of £8,991.

### School news

**The Godolphin School, Salisbury**  
The Governors of The Godolphin School are pleased to announce the following: Scholarships and Awards for September 1999:

**Founders Scholarship**

**Radnor Scholarships**

**St Edmund's Scholarships**

**Sandringham Scholarships**

**St George's Scholarships**

**St John's Scholarships**

**St Paul's Scholarships**

**St Peter's Scholarships**

**St Paul's Girls' School Scholarships**

**St Paul's**



## NEWS

**Bandits seize Britons on safari**

■ Thirteen tourists, including up to five Britons, were kidnapped as they slept at a camp site in a Ugandan gorilla reserve. Their Hutu rebel attackers, who were armed with spears, guns and machetes, also killed a game warden and set cars and tents alight before fleeing into the forest.

The bandits are believed to have taken 27 people, including a French diplomat, from the camp but they later let all the women and children go. .... Page 2

**Prince goes near the bone over beef**

■ The Prince of Wales was embroiled in a political controversy over beef on the bone after he and Alun Michael, the Welsh Secretary, ate the banned meat at a Welsh food promotion. An investigation by environmental health officials was under way to discover how they were offered the banned cut. .... Page 1

**Straw warns police**

The Home Secretary Jack Straw gave a warning to chief constables to take race policing seriously or face government intervention in their forces. .... Pages 1, 9

**Care of the old**

Frank Dobson was last night acutely aware of "dithering" after delaying his response to a Royal Commission report calling for a £1.2 billion annual package to give free long-term nursing care to elderly people. .... Pages 1, 4

**Solicitors' crisis**

More than 100 solicitors will attend a crisis meeting at the Law Society today to demand action over a multi-million pound shortfall in the fund which pays out on negligence claims. .... Page 2

**Balloon challenge**

The challenge to be the first team to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon became a true race with the launch of Breitling Orbiter 3 in the Swiss Alps. .... Page 3

**Drinking time**

Students at Oxford are opposing plans to cut college bar opening hours in an attempt to improve examination results. .... Page 5

**£2.5 million award**

A girl aged ten whose intelligent mind is trapped inside a gravity disabled body was awarded £2.5 million. .... Page 15

**Britain needs spies, says Le Carré**

■ Spies should come in from the cold, despite East-West détente, the spy writer John le Carré has said. The former MI6 intelligence officer declared in a rare lecture that spies are needed more than ever. With the former Soviet Union fragmented, Britain's spies had a tough challenge to keep pace with the proliferation of problems in smaller countries. .... Page 11



On the day when Gleneagles opened to non-members for the first time in ten years, the weather ensured that all three courses were closed

## BUSINESS

**Soft landing:** The stock market slumped on fears of an end to the recent spate of interest rate cuts while the pound gained after new data suggested the economy is on course for a soft landing. .... Page 27

**Bid approach:** First Choice Holidays confirmed it had received preliminary approaches that could lead to offers for the company, offering shares 24p to 180p. .... Page 27

**Canary float:** Canary Wharf, Britain's largest commercial office complex owner, is to float the company on the stock market at a value of up to £2.6 billion. .... Page 27

**Markets:** The FTSE 100 fell 114.2 to 6060.9. The pound rose 0.62 cents to \$1.6075 and 0.53p against the euro to 68.0p. The sterling index rose to 101.6 from 100.9. .... Page 30

**Cricket:** England became the first of the Test-playing countries to announce their squad for the World Cup. It includes Michael Atherton and Andrew Flintoff. .... Page 52

**Football:** The hopes of Chelsea's Graeme le Saux avoiding detection and punishment for his assault on Robbie Fowler have been foiled after the FA asked the BBC for its videotape. .... Page 52

**Rugby union:** Peter Rogers, formerly with Transvaal, and Brett Skinkinson, formerly with Waikato, will win their first caps for Wales against France. .... Page 49

**Rowing:** Cambridge's crew for the Boat Race is the tallest ever, with Josh West setting an individual record at 6ft 9in, although the cox, Vian Sharif, is only 5ft. .... Page 50

**Jubilee sights:** When it finally opens, London Underground's Jubilee Line extension to Greenwich will be a showcase for Britain's finest architects. .... Page 18

**Cage stumbles:** Hugely hyped before its American opening last weekend, *8mm* takes Nicolas Cage on a baffling journey into the tacky world of snuff movies. .... Page 19

**Terfel triumphs:** In Sydney the Welsh baritone Bryn Terfel has scored a big success in the title-role of Verdi's *Falstaff*, which he will be bringing to Covent Garden next season. .... Page 20

**On the road:** Gene have embarked on a long tour to improve their position in the lower division of Brixton celebrity. .... Page 21

**Run of his life:** Last year, over drinks in Langham's Brasserie, John Spurling, semi-retired, overweight and out of condition, agreed to run in the Flora London Marathon. Worse, the 59-year-old pledged to raise £1million. .... Page 16

**Medicine chest:** Dr Thomas Stuttaford explains why avid runners need no worries about their cardiovascular system when they run the Marathon. .... Page 16

**Going natural:** Jane Shilling had never had so much as a whiff of an aromatherapist's essence when a disastrous year made her cast aside her scepticism. .... Page 17

## LIBBY PURVES

For what is that weekly contest across the dispatch boxes, if not a duel between Ping the Elastic Man and the bald-pated ostrich-like figure of Big Egg himself? .... Page 22

## GERALD KAUFMAN

There is no significant element which would be unrepresented if the Tories shut up shop. .... Page 22

## RICHARD TYRRELL

The Wakeham commission on the future of the House of Lords can either deliver the minimalist package which the Government wants, or it can think boldly. .... Page 8

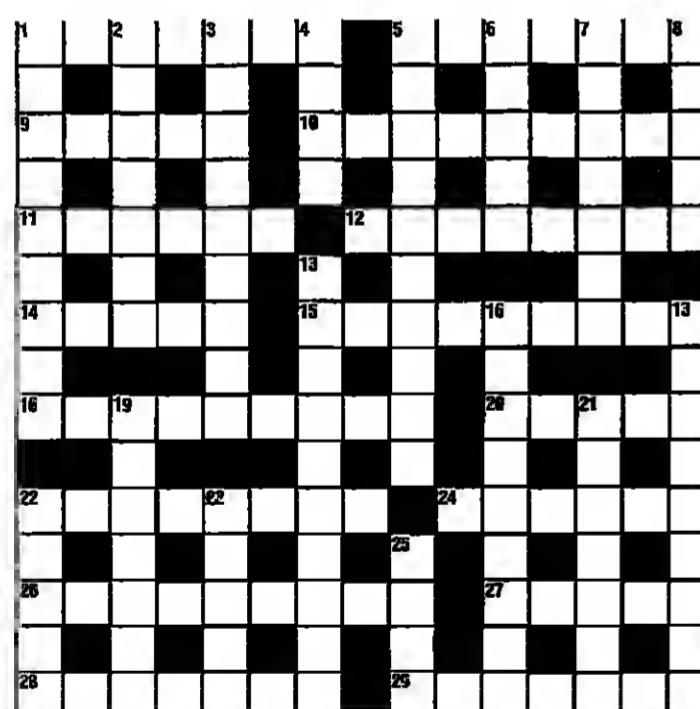
## PETER RIDDELL

The Wakeham commission on the future of the House of Lords can either deliver the minimalist package which the Government wants, or it can think boldly. .... Page 8

**Al Commodore Frederick Hainsford, bomber pilot and diplomat; Opoku Ware II, King of Ashanti; Lord Dean of Beswick, former Labour MP. .... Page 25**

**The Lawrence inquiry and racism in schools; Royalties on works of art; Bishops and the Lords; Gulf War illness. .... Page 23**

## THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,040



## WEATHER INFORMATION

**Latest Road and Weather conditions**  
UK Weather: All regions 0320 446 910  
UK Roads - All regions 0320 401 410  
UK Roads - London 0320 401 410  
P25 and Link Roads 0320 401 747  
National Highways 0320 401 247  
Channel crossings 0320 401 2016  
Planning to Heathrow & Gatwick airports 0320 407 205

## Weather by Fax

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Scotland 0320 401 205

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123 destinations world wide  
by fax number 0320 412 126  
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Motoring

Europe Country by Country 0320 401 002  
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Le Shuttle 0320 401 007

## AA Car reports by fax

For used car reports from the AA 0320 410 209  
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# Hays

## Expansion in Europe

### Results for the 6 months ended 31 December 1998

Results for the second half of 1998 demonstrated the strength of the Group's strategic approach in all economic conditions, with our three main businesses achieving healthy organic growth as well as benefiting from carefully selected acquisitions in the UK and on the Continent of Europe.

Profit before tax and goodwill amortisation rose by 20% to £10.4 million, and interim earnings per share by 19% to 9.2p. In line with Hays' policy of consistently growing shareholder returns, the interim dividend will be increased to 2.0p per Ordinary Share.

#### Important Developments

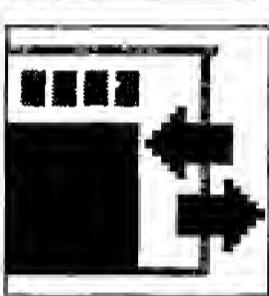
We continue to benefit from the trend towards the contracting-out of major business functions in the areas of distribution, commercial operations and personnel.

In addition, we are successfully expanding all three businesses' operations into the Continent of Europe through the careful acquisition and development of companies with compatible management structures and business philosophies.

#### Prospects

All three core activities remain well placed for growth. Planned future developments include new outsourcing contracts and further acquisitions to build on our increasing progress throughout Europe.

## DISTRIBUTION



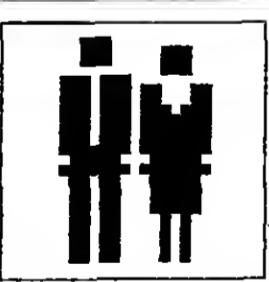
Operating profits were ahead of second half 1997 by 6% to £38.4 million. Our presence in all the major European countries is a great advantage as both retailers and manufacturers reorganise their distribution across Europe.

## COMMERCIAL



Operating profit rose by 21% to £34.7 million. Mail Services is now a leader in pre 9am deliveries in France. Following recent acquisitions Hays now offers a broad range of Business Process Support Services.

## PERSONNEL



Operating profit up 30% to £41.6 million. Strong growth continues particularly for temporary placements. Hays Personnel is now well established in France in the specialist sectors of IT, Banking and Insurance staff.

### FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1998

	1997	1998	% Change
Profit before tax <sup>1</sup>	£92.2m	£110.4m	+20
Earnings per ordinary share <sup>1</sup>	7.7p	9.2p	+19
Net dividend per share	1.7p	2.0p	+16

<sup>1</sup> Before exceptional item and amortisation of goodwill.

To receive a copy of the Interim Report for 1998, please write to David Beckley.

Hays plc, Hays House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5HJ.

The Directors of Hays plc accept responsibility for the contents of this advertisement which has been approved for the purposes of section 57(1) of the Financial Services Act 1986 by Deloitte & Touche, Millmead, 1 Little New Street, London EC4A 3TJ, a firm authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to carry on investment business.

# Hays

THE BUSINESS SERVICES GROUP

# SLPH profits halved by bad weather spell

BY MARLIANE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

GENERAL insurance profits at Sun Life and Provincial Holdings (SLPH), the UK insurer controlled by AXA of France, have halved as a result of bad-weather claims in 1998.

SLPH launched a £3.4 billion bid for Guardian Royal Exchange in January and said yesterday a strategic review would settle the fate of two of GRE's business units.

Rumours had been circulating that Mark Wood, group chief executive of SLPH, was preparing to sell GRE's Irish and UK Life operations once the deal had gone through.

He said yesterday, however,

that it was "too early to say" what would happen to the businesses until the review had been completed in four to five months' time.

SLPH unveiled a 14 per cent rise in full-year operating profits in 1998 to £247.1 million (1997: pro forma: £216.5 million).

Weather-related claims of £14.5 million affected SLPH's general insurance operating profit before tax which fell to £26 million (1997: pro forma £52.2 million).

The insurer's results were boosted, however, by a 21 per cent rise in life and pensions operating profit to £210.3

million (1997 pro forma £173.3 million).

The group said the 1997 merger between AXA Equity and Law and Sun Life had been completed within 18 months, six months ahead of schedule, and estimated savings had increased to £47 million (originally £37 million).

Asset management operating profit before tax increased 24 per cent to £29.1 million (1997: £23.4 million) and the full-year dividend is up 15 per cent (originally 13.5p per share).

SLPH said the proposed merger with GRE would generate £55 million of savings per year, up from the

previous estimate of £50 million.

The group has spent £6 million promoting the AXA brand but Mr Wood said he intended to keep the Sun Life brand and the PPP healthcare brand for the short term.

If the proposed deal with GRE goes ahead, the group would derive 61 per cent of premiums from UK life business, 10 per cent from health, 5 per cent from Ireland, 9 per cent from AXA's general insurance brands and 15 per cent from GRE's general insurance businesses.

Tempus, page 30

## New chief for Close Brothers

Sir David Scholey, the former SG Warburg chairman, is to become chairman of Close Brothers, the independent merchant bank. He succeeds Michael Morley, who is retiring early because of ill health.

Yesterday Close reported a fall in pre-tax profits to £33.2 million from £36.75 million for the six months to January 31. Rod Kent, chief executive, attributed the fall in profits to an exceptional first-half last year.

Earnings were 18.35p a share (20.15p), but the interim dividend rises to 5.3p a share (4.8p). The shares fell 32.5p to 63.25p. City Diary, page 31

#### McBride departure

McBride, the manufacturer of supermarkets' own-label household products and washing powders, is parting company with Johan Vandepitte, one of its two managing directors, after a difficult half-year in which its sales were hit by the success of Persil tablets. Turnover rose 6 per cent to £248.4 million in the six months to December 31 helped by acquisitions. Pre-tax profits fell to £3.6 million (£14.1 million). Earnings per share fell from 6.9p to 2.9p. The interim dividend is maintained at 2.5p.

#### Shares dip at Ocean Ocean Group, the transport and environmental services company, yesterday posted its fifth consecutive year of earnings growth but saw its shares fall 35p to 804p after it said the outlook was challenging and it failed to provide any fresh acquisition news.

Underlying pre-tax profits fell 13.1 per cent ahead of £83.1 million, for the year ending December 31. Underlying earnings per share rose to 17.95p (16.60p) and turnover was £1.33 billion (£1.13 billion).

#### Break talks to rival

Break for the Border, the bar and restaurant operator, and Po Na Na Group, its Ofex-listed rival, are the latest leisure sector minnows to join the consolidation bandwagon. The companies issued a joint statement yesterday confirming that they were "in discussions which may or may not lead to a merger". The enlarged group would have a market capitalisation of about £35 million. A deal is expected within four weeks.

#### Boost for NTL

NTL, one of Britain's big three cable companies, yesterday completed a £500 million deal that will allow it to supply ITV and Channel 4 via its analogue service until at least 2012. The deal extends NTL's current contracts by ten years. The deal aims to secure transmission of the two channels until the Government switches off analogue signals.

#### Chesterfield sales

Chesterfield Properties, the company that is liquidating its estate and returning cash to shareholders, began the process yesterday with the sale of 16 sites, raising £100 million.



Open book: John Le Carré, left, with Tim Hely Hutchinson

## £100m mutuality boost

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

YORKSHIRE Building Society is to spend £100 million this year on demonstrating the benefit of routinisation to its members through enhanced savings rates and lower mortgage repayments.

It is also introducing a rule that will make it harder for a pro-conversion resolution to be passed by members: any at-

tempt to convert the society by carpetbaggers will henceforth need 75 per cent support from members rather than just a straight majority.

Yorkshire yesterday an-

nounced a 24 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £68.6 mil-

lion, on the back of net mort-

gage lending virtually un-

changed at £908 million.

Revealing the plans to divert another £100 million to mem-

bers, David Anderson, York-

shire's chief executive, said:

"We have given out mutual

benefits worth £180 million

over three years."

It was announced that as of

yesterday the society's mort-

gage rate moved down to 6.6

per cent.

It is also introducing a rule that will make it harder for a pro-conversion resolution to be passed by members: any at-

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roscience for an undisclosed

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the previously agreed lock-up

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Sir Victor Blank's term as a newspaper proprietor looks likely to be short lived. The friendly merger talks the Mirror Group chairman had been having with Trinity have turned distinctly frosty. Instead of the amicable coming together which would have seen Sir Victor emerge as chairman of the enlarged group, the bid that has now been slapped on the table indicates that the services of the ingénue press baron would no longer be required. We are talking hostile here.

Perhaps this should not be surprising. It would have taken a degree of magnanimity for the Trinity chairman, Peter Birch, to have ceded the rule to Sir Victor. After all, the Mirror Group chairman, in his role as deputy chairman of GUS, recently deprived Mr Birch of a future as chairman of Argos. Had GUS not succeeded in its hard-fought takeover of the catalogue retailer, Mr Birch would now be chairman. Instead, he has had to suffer the prolonged accusations from GUS chairman Lord Wolfson that, as a member of the Argos board at the time, Mr Birch did not adhere to the highest of City standards. While the Takeover Panel has largely dismissed the GUS carpeting, it can have done little to make Mr Birch feel well-disposed towards the Wolfson team.

He has easily replaced the lost Argos job with the chairmanship of Britain's biggest property company, Land Securities, but that is no reason why Mr Birch should feel inclined to hand over his role

as a media magnate.

Orchestrating genuine mergers requires a degree of altruism which does not always come easily. When Peter Birch was chief executive of the Abbey National, doing a remarkable job of transforming the building society, National Westminster suggested that together their organisations could make music. Despite the clear potential, the discussions were not prolonged.

Those synergies undoubtedly exist in putting Trinity and Mirror together to create the country's largest media group. The sheer scale means that the deal must now be put on ice while the MMC scrutinises the pairing. That will take many months, although any analyst could explain that the only problem areas are Scotland and Northern Ireland. If Trinity and Mirror had already agreed a friendly merger, they could already be presenting the MMC with the solution to those minor difficulties. Instead, there will be months of uncertainty, merely delaying the start of the real auction as RIM and Trinity fight over the prize.

In the meantime, Sir Victor Blank has to try to run Mirror as if it has a long-term independent future. That means saying goodbye to News Bumper and topless

darts: the buyers are already lining up for Live TV.

Sir Victor knows his task is to win the best price for Mirror. That is certainly closer to 230p than Trinity's sighting shot. But, given that the rival RIM is offering cash and major shareholders PDM have indicated their preference for some paper, a touch of friendliness, coupled with a little more generosity, might have given Trinity a winning edge.

#### Long-term this is not the answer

The insurance industry had hoped that the Royal Commission into long-term care was about to deliver a bonanza. The insurers' own efforts to sell policies that will pay out for nursing home fees have proved pitifully ineffective: this looks suspiciously like one area of financial services where mis-selling has not occurred. Yet demographics and the country's ability to meet the cost of an in-

## COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

creasingly aged population point to a growing need for just this sort of insurance policy.

The Royal Commission does not think so. While a couple of its members voiced concern about the costs that the commission's proposals might be laying in store for future generations, the majority have been more concerned to ensure equity. This is fine in principle. It is clearly wrong that the prudent individual should be penalised for having amassed capital that can be used to fund nursing care in old age while the prodigal will be provided with the same level of care. But the bills have to be taken into account, and the bills will undoubtedly rise.

The Government now has to decide whether to act on the commission's report or put it on a shelf and concentrate on more palatable issues. It should do neither. The failing in the exercise was to try to isolate long-term care from the whole process of growing old. The subject needs to be viewed within the context of

the whole pensions debate which the Government once seemed so keen to initiate but which has degenerated into the sort of conversation in which no one listens to the others.

There is huge confusion now about the Government's plans on pensions. This is not just among those who should be paying for them but also among those who should be providing them. Instead of simplifying the system, the proposals for stakeholder pensions have been added as an extra tier on a structure already threatening to topple.

Yet, as the average age extends and retirement ages head in the opposite direction, the importance of ensuring that individuals make adequate provision for old age has never been greater. It should not be impossible for that provision to take account of the prospect that, at some stage during that prolonged retirement, they may need to pay for nursing care. The failure of insurers to sell their long-term care policies

Milan to Dublin, so Germany will have to do without.

In Britain, where growth is still weakest and rates highest, job vacancies, new house reservations and even export orders are picking up. So the headlong cuts in base rates since November may well pause to let the world absorb Gordon Brown's Budget.

This is not convergence, but there is a short-term outbreak of policy coincidence. Why, then, has it caused sterling to rise against the dollar and therefore also against the euro?

Though dull, the UK economy is under more certain control than either of the other two. Denis Healey, New Europe's old bruiser, argues that the euro might not exist in five years. Even the euro's biggest fan could not say that about sterling.

#### Blair's euro effect lasts just six days

R ecession, what recession? Japan aside, the other three main currency blocs are suddenly all rethinking their drive of cutting interest rates to keep Eastern infections at bay.

In America, wage and activity indicators are buoyant. The Federal Reserve's next move could be upwards, some analysts now speculate, as Alan Greenspan seeks to continue his virtuous performance of keeping economic growth on the tightrope between inflation and recession.

On the Continent, Germany may howl with exaggerated pain like a footballer appealing for a penalty. But referee Wim Duisenberg and his assistants at the European Central Bank say that the rest of euroland does not need a cut. Growth is healthy from Maastricht to Madrid and from

## Burmah to repay £280m to investors

BY CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

BURMAH CASTROL, the lubricants and chemicals group, surprised the market yesterday with plans for a £280 million capital repayment. The promised payout of 51p per share by way of a capital reconstruction boosted Burmah's flagging share price by 5 per cent to 85p.

The chemicals company, which owns the Castrol GTX motor oil brand, has been suffering from weak demand worldwide, in particular from economies in the Far East, such as Thailand, where Castrol had particular success in gaining market share. Asia Pacific accounts for a third of Burmah's business and its shares have almost halved in value from a peak of 131 last June.

Tim Stevenson, Burmah's chief executive, said yesterday that he was more optimistic than a year ago with trading conditions in Asia Pacific showing some signs of improvement. Burmah yesterday reported flat pre-tax profits of £246 million, after excluding currency losses. Losses from currency fluctuations reduced operating

profit by £25 million last year, reducing reported pre-tax profit by 7 per cent.

Burmah is returning capital by way of a share split into ordinary shares and capital shares. Subject to Court approval, the latter will be cancelled by way of a cash payment or issue of loan notes. As a result, the ordinary shares in issue will be reduced by 16.7 per cent, boosting the company's earnings per share.

Mr Stevenson promised yesterday that Burmah would continue to restructure and indicated that acquisitions and disposals would focus the business further. A £10 million three-year reorganisation programme is under way and is expected to generate savings of £30 million per year by the end of the period.

Castrol's profit saw a decline from £211 million to £187 million after the currency hit. However, the company said it had gained market share despite intense competition and the market declines in the Far East. Chemicals profits were down £1 million to £75 million during the year.

## Gucci to confront LVMH

BY FRASER NELSON

GUCCI has called a showdown with rival LVMH on March 23, when it will hold a vote on whether it should accept a board director nominated by Bernard Arnault, the LVMH chairman.

Domenico De Sole, chief executive of Gucci, is urging shareholders to reject M Arnault's nominees as "the eyes and ears" of the rival fashion houses in the LVMH stable.

Although M Arnault had bought 34.4 per cent of the shares, Gucci has created an equal amount of shares that will be controlled by a trust – neutralising any sway he may have in the voting.

It is expected that Umberto Guida, M Arnault's nominated director, will be rejected unless LVMH promises not to buy any more Gucci shares and gives assurances that Signor Guida will leave the room when its business secrets are discussed. LVMH is still trying to sue Gucci for issuing the new shares.

## Aegis aims for top spot in US

BY RAYMOND SNODDY

AEGIS, the advertising and marketing group, has set itself the target of being the number one operator in its field in the US within five years.

Crispin Davis, chief executive, said that Aegis, which yesterday announced a 17 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £51 million for the year to December, plans to expand in the US in areas such as the Internet, research, direct response marketing and sponsorship.

The company said it has as much as £100 million to spend on acquisitions. "The US represents 40 per cent of the world advertising market. We have made a very encouraging start there and the upside is enormous," Mr Davis said.

In January Aegis won a \$280 million (£170 million) contract from Pfizer, its biggest yet, and now hopes to topple the leaders of the fragmented US market, Y&R and McCann Erickson.

The full-year dividend rises 21 per cent to 85p.

## Shield improves its offer for Axis

SHIELD DIAGNOSTICS has been forced to improve its merger offer for Axis Biochemicals by 25 per cent to secure the backing of the Norwegian company's largest shareholders (Paul Durman writes).

Thorvald Brovig, an influential Norwegian investor, and Mosvold-Farsund, a venture capital firm, agreed to back the merger only after David Evans, Shield's managing director, offered to sweeten the terms. The £180 million deal is

intended to create a world leader in the field of innovative heart disease tests. Shield will now have to offer 1.25 new shares for every Axis share.

Embarrassingly, the original deal was strongly backed by the Axis management headed by Svein Lien, who is to become joint managing director of the merged company. Mr Lien said the deal had to be announced in January before it was "exactly clear ... what our shareholders [were] willing to accept".



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4/11/1999

## STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

# Investors run for cover over US rate worries

WHILE interest rates this side of the Atlantic may yet still be coming down, in the US there is a real danger that the next move will be up.

Stronger than expected US economic data and evidence of a slowdown in the computer industry have raised fears about a tightening of fiscal policy by the Federal Reserve.

This sent investors scurrying for cover in London where questions were again being asked about the high level of the market in the face of further falls in corporate profitability among blue chips.

As trading drew to a close in the Square Mile, the Dow Jones industrial average was nursing a fall of more than 80 points. The FTSE 100 index did manage to close above its low point of the day, but was still down 114.2 at 6,069.9 by the close. Trading conditions proved thinner than of late with 916 million shares traded. By contrast, the FTSE 250 index rose 10.1 to 5,258.4.

Marks & Spencer retreated 81p to 4114p as WestLB Panmure, the broker, told clients to "sell". It values the shares at 300p. Several directors unloaded stock yesterday. Christopher Littmon has sold 41,079 at 416p, reducing his holding to 9,369 shares, while Paul Smith has sold 16,392 shares at 414p and now holds 2,000 shares.

The start of unofficial trading in South African Breweries saw the issue lose much of its sparkle after a placing at the 428p level. The price touched 460p before slipping to close 19p better at 47p in thin trading that saw less than a million shares change hands.

First Choice raced up 29p to 183p after confirming reports in *The Times* last week, that it has received bid approaches. At these levels, the package tour operator is capitalised at £617 million. The tour operators have been undergoing a period of consolidation. Airtours, which is seen as a potential suitor for First Choice, rose 18p to 495p and Thomson Travel 11p to 180p in sympathy.

Severn Trent was wanted with a rise of 8p to 896p after HSBC Securities, the broker, raised its recommendation for the shares from "add" to "buy". A broker's recommendation enabled RMC Group to resist the downward pull with a rise of 29p to 70p. JP Morgan, the US investment



Nice wok if you can get it: Ian Blackburn, chief executive, saw shares of Perkins Foods edge 1p higher to 112.5p

bank, has been telling clients that the shares are undervalued and should be bought.

A revival of speculative buying hoisted SIG Group 7p to 175p. Followers of the stock claim CRH, the Irish building materials group, may be looking to bid for SIG.

Elsewhere in the building materials industry, Hanson hardened 5p to 513p as Salomon

Smith Barney, the US securities house, raised its target for the shares to 520p to 570p.

ARM Holdings ran into profit taking ending the session 50p lower at 223.42p. Douglas Dunn, a director, has bought 2,400 shares for £19.25. He will be hoping the price can maintain its recent momentum that has seen it come up from the 750p level since in line with expectations.

AIM-listed Petra Diamonds was briefly suspended at 60p. The group, as lead member of the Nabera Mining consortium, has been awarded the management contract for the South African government-owned Alexkor diamond mining business.

Alliance Resources was also suspended at 6p due to the delay in publication of its interim results following the acquisition of Difco in November. They are now due to be published on March 12.

■ **GILT-EDGED:** Stronger than expected consumer credit numbers left bonds nursing falls and may have limited the scope for another cut in interest rates when the Monetary Policy Committee meets this week. In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt finished 81p down at 116.14, while among conventional issues Treasury 9 per cent 2008 lost 91p to 132.69.

■ **NEW YORK:** US shares drifted lower on the back of concern about interest rates and weakness in the technology sector. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 13.86 points to 9,292.72.

The latest twist in the food price war has succeeded in unnerving investors. Many of them now take the view that the situation can only get worse.

This time Asda, unchanged at 155.1p, has embarked on a cost-cutting programme which brokers say will bring pain to its rivals. It follows hard on the heels of a similar move last week by rival Tesco, down 18p to 168.1p, which cut the price of 250 product lines.

Brokers have had plenty to say on the subject. Credit

Lyonnaise has cut J Sainsbury's, up better at 361p, from "buy" to "add" and, instead, has turned its attention to rival Somerfield, up 51p to 380p, which it rates a "buy".

WestLB Panmure has cut its rating for Safeway, down 6p to 262.1p, and Tesco from "buy" to "hold".

Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, has gone one step further and told clients to switch out of the food retailers altogether and into general retailers.

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# Time for Blair to face up to the euro's implications

**New Europe offers the chance for an honest debate about Britain and the single currency**

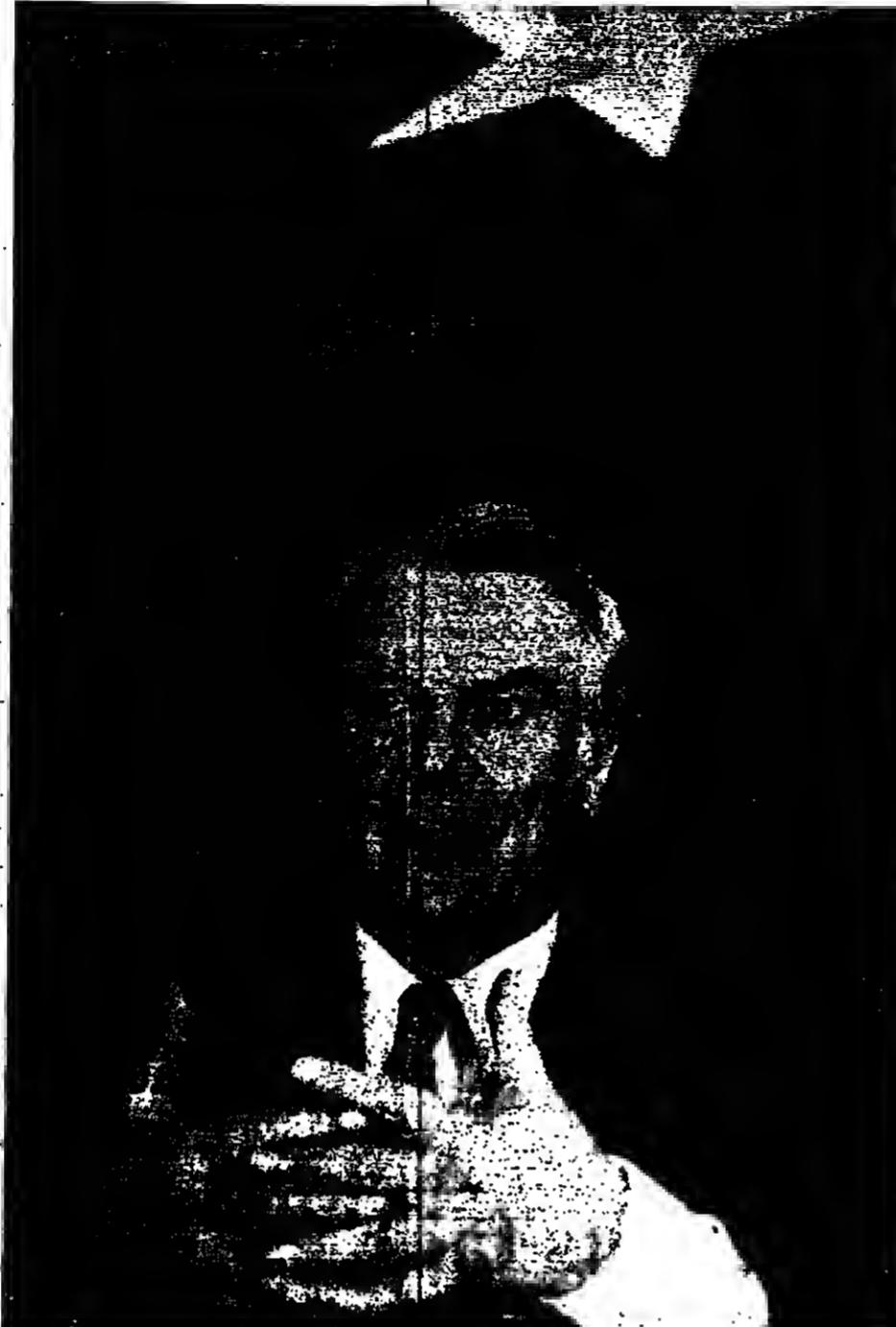
**L**ooking back over the columns that I have written on this page since the new year, I was rather concerned to discover last week that six out of the eight headlines included the word "Europe". I was therefore determined to move on to another subject this week.

But writing for a daily newspaper means responding to the flow of daily events—and yesterday there was an event in London that I could not ignore. This was the launch of a new campaigning and research organisation called New Europe. The purpose of New Europe is to offer a positive, economically coherent and politically open-minded argument for Britain to remain a fully committed member of the European Union, while retaining its monetary and economic independence as a non-member of the eurozone. I naturally welcome the creation of New Europe, since its analysis coincides exactly with the one that I have presented since I joined *The Times* nearly nine years ago. But I must confess to two even more selfish reasons for inflicting on the column's readers the seventh article on Europe in nine weeks.

My first selfish reason is simply that I was involved with Lord Owen and others in hatching the idea of New Europe. I had long been convinced that a group of respected centrist businessmen, economists and other public personalities with impeccably pro-European credentials could be assembled to present a persuasive case against Britain joining the single currency and, just as importantly, to demonstrate that opposition to joining EMU could be based on economic realism and geopolitical rationalism, not on tub-thumping nationalism, imperial nostalgia or right-wing xenophobia.

My second selfish reason for writing about the launch of New Europe is that it gives me an easy chance to respond to the many letters and e-mails that I have received of late all with the same two demands: declare, once and for all, whether you are for or against Europe; and if you think that Britain should stay in the EU but outside EMU, please explain how a country can continue in this semi-detached state.

I now have an easy answer to both these questions. I can simply direct readers to the ten-page "statement of general principles" published by New Europe. This statement covers precisely the questions posed by so many readers and offers answers as good as any I have seen. It is obtainable either from New Europe's website, [www.new-europe.co.uk](http://www.new-europe.co.uk), or from its physical address: 52



Lord Owen aims to show that it is possible to be pro-European but oppose the euro

Walnut Tree Walk, London, SE1 6DN, 0171-582 1001. Having said this, let me answer more directly the two questions I posed.

Am I for or against Europe? The answer is that I strongly support Britain's involvement not only in the EU and the single market, but also in several other forums of European integration, including the European Court of Human Rights and Nato. In fact, there are several areas in which I would support much closer integration than the Government. For example, I would like to see Britain abandon its border controls as part of the Schengen agreement, to abolish the absurd quarantine laws, to join the European time zone and to stop the tantrums about "giving back our money" in EU budget debates.

I do not believe, however, that all plans for closer European integration are *ipso facto* desirable for their own sake. And I do not accept that all efforts at greater European co-operation should be undertaken within the political structure of the EU. I believe, for example, that the EU lacks the democratic, legitimacy and mature political structures to

send soldiers into war. What has all this to do with economic and monetary union? Monetary policy, taxation and public spending are, in my view, areas of national sovereignty every bit as important as foreign policy and defence. In these economic areas, just as in foreign policy and defence, the EU lacks the political legitimacy and the practical competence to justify an abandonment of national sovereignty. To say this is not to oppose any pooling of national sovereignty in economic matters under any circumstances.

Just as Nato represents a partial pooling of national military power, so the single market and the EU already represents a substantial pooling of national economic sovereignty. The rational argument of those who oppose EMU is not that they oppose any pooling of economic sovereignty—but Tony Blair dishonestly claimed last week.

It is simply that ceding control over monetary decisions to the European Central Bank is a bridge much too far, at least under the present constitutional arrangements in Europe. "Under the present constitutional arrangements" may sound like a weasel phrase, designed to allow me to slide out of my opposition to EMU (an event which will be triggered, in the opinion of many of my abusive correspondents, the moment that I receive the relevant directive from Rupert Murdoch). But for me the constitutional position in Europe goes to the heart of the matter.

I believe that EMU will only succeed for the continental countries if it gradually leads to a full-scale political unification: the creation of a United States of Europe, about as closely integrated as the USA. Whether Britain should participate in such a United States of Europe would depend, for me, on two questions: What is the USE's political constitution—is it essentially a democracy or a bureaucracy? And what are Britain's prospects as an independent nation outside the USE?

The first question, about what kind of political power will be created as the natural corollary of EMU, cannot begin to be answered or even debated in Britain because all our "pro-European" political arrangements in Europe categorically deny that there is any prospect of creating

an independent nation outside the USE.

It can only imagine one situation in which euroland would even be tempted to consider such a policy of cutting off its nose to spite its face. If the British economy were performing extremely well, while the euroland economy were suffering an economic disaster, Britain's independent success might become a source of embarrassment. So perhaps Britain should join EMU to avoid embarrassing euroland if it does too well. Is that what Tony Blair really believes?

—kate@kateksy@the-times.co.uk

## Nice one Cyril

**CYRIL STEIN**, the legendary former Ladbrokes boss, phones me from his sickbed—a touch of the lurgy, apparently—to deny suggestions that he is poised to cash in his chips at the plush St James's Club, just off Piccadilly.

"There is no truth in it," he booms. "There was a rumour flying around the last few weeks—and we do get approaches, of course, including one very recently—but there are no negotiations."

Stein assures me he is still keen on the idea of a chain of St James's Clubs and claims to be eyeing possible sites in New York. But for the time being he says he is "enjoying making money for myself, rather than for 70,000 shareholders".

So how, I inquire, did the sale rumour start? "It might have been when the managing director of Cliveden came to see me at the club," Stein opines. "But if I was going to do any deal I certainly wouldn't discuss it at the club."

**SIR DAVID WHITE**, the chairman of Mansfield Brewery, has been kind enough to send me a bottle of the company's Millennium Ale—an attractively packaged, limited-edition brew that is "designed to be drunk on New Year's Eve 1999". A word of caution to any would-be imbibers among you: At 8.5 per cent ABV, any overindulgence is likely to preclude seeing in the new millennium in a walking state.



Stein: happily making money for himself instead of shareholders



### That isn't

THE dreaded image consultants have been up to their tricks again. SEC Group, the financial services provider, announced yesterday that it is to change its name to i.e. group plc. You may well ask, "Sadie, the new identity has nothing to do with the Latin *id est*, but rather stands for 'integrity' and 'expertise' (qualities one automatically associates with financial advisers)."

According to the blurb, the new name enables the group to offer "a unique, seamless and holistic approach to financial advisory services", and is designed to get away from its origins as Securitised Endowment Contracts. I am told that the name i.e. conveys, among other things, the

firm's "innovativeness" (sic). The only consolation is that the name change is subject to shareholder approval. If investors have any sense, they will vote against it.

### Sad note

I WAS sorry to hear that ill-health has forced Michael Morley to retire early as chairman of Close Brothers. Morley, who is a gifted pianist, is one of those rare men who have worked in both industry and finance.

Although he was involved with Close Brothers from its earliest days, including a spell under the ownership of Consolidated Goldfields, he left banking in the 1980s and founded a specialist engineer called Paragon, which was eventually bought out by Portals, the banknote maker. He finally resurfaced for a second spell as chairman of Close Brothers in 1995.

Rod Kent, Close's managing director, says: "He's one of the very few merchant bankers who have also been merchants. He's also the only man I know who's been chairman of the same bank twice."

### In flames

ON FRIDAY night, a colleague popped into Nam Long, the Knightsbridge cocktail bar beloved of James Archer and his fellow flaming Ferraris. Sadly, Lord Archer's son and his trader pals from CSFB were nowhere to be seen. Although there was still demand for the now infamous cocktail

# Airborne Canary leaves ruins of the tower in its wake

**Five years on, the Docklands development has become a viable business, writes Carl Mortished**

pounds, to protect the company from the Inland Revenue.

Meanwhile, things are going right at the Wharf. There is a buzz about the place, the footfall that is generated by 4.7 million square feet of fully let offices. CSFB is buying another half million square feet and HSBC is building a tower of one million square feet.

The bigger prize is to the east—in the shadow of the tower of One Canada Square lie deep foundations waiting for steel frames. According to George Iacobescu, chief executive, there are five million square feet of potential offices and shops with planning permits.

**T**his is a new, North American style of property development—"You want a building? How big? How many offices, trading floors, lavatories? When do you need it?"

Mr Iacobescu reckons the City cannot compete. "I looked at the design for Plantation House [a City development]. What happens if someone wants 700,000 square feet instead of 500,000 square feet?"

But could it all have happened without the lure of a massive fiscal holiday? Probably not, but that was another time and another Government. Today, the stock market is being offered a £2 billion tax-transparent real estate bet on the success of London as a financial centre over the next ten years. It looks plausible; the Canary is definitely airborne.



Canary Wharf has begun to attract tenants at market rents

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"I'm all ready for the Canary Wharf float"



1998/9 High Low Last Company	Price 09 -/-	Y%	PE
<b>ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES</b>			
46 355 United Breweries 472 - 61 54 124			
47 279 Bassett (P) 212 - 55 55 124			
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# Muffins are perfect recipe for success

BY HENRIETTA LAKE

A new image, clever marketing and booming snacking culture in the UK has turned into the perfect recipe for 'The Fabulous Bakin' Boys' almost to double turnover in just over one year.

The firm, based in Witney in Oxfordshire, expects sales worth £10 million this year after rebranding its 40 varieties of muffins, flapjacks and cookies in 1997 and deciding to risk allocating 10 per cent of its turnover to marketing each year.

The Fabulous Bakin' Boys, a partnership between two brothers, Gary and Jon Frank, and husband and wife team Andrew and Sara Staples, now has a staff of 72 but started in very different circumstances after the stock market crash of the late 1980s.

Having started on the dole for a year, Gary Frank, a former City trader, decided to set up the Delicious Donut Company with the help of the Government's enterprise scheme. Business was fine until the competition hotted up.

Mr Frank said: "Soon everyone was cashing in on the snacking craze; our doughnuts and muffins were being copied everywhere. We had to think of a way to set ourselves apart from the competition and appeal directly to the customer."

But this was not an easy task as the partners believed that a totally different style of marketing was needed in order to succeed and wanted to distance themselves from the way baked goods were traditionally sold using homey values.

So the partners hired a recruitment consultant to find a marketing manager and briefed a design agency to help them to rethink their product.

The project cost £750,000 and was funded entirely through accumulated profits, on a turnover of just under £5 million in 1997.

It was a nerve-racking nine months for the firm as numerous ideas from the design team were rejected. But then, with only a couple of months to go before the money ran out, the idea of the Fabulous Bakin' Boys, its logo, name and mission to bring "fun, innovative, and tasty products to the consumer" was born.

"It was a lot of money for us to spend back then and we really thought we were running out of time, but in the end the payback has been huge," Mr Frank said.

Today the company has a new £2 million factory in Witney and the brothers can count the caterers Compass and Gardner Merchant, plus Boots, Morrisons, Budgens and British Airways among their clients.

Last month the Bakin' Boys decided to take their message to the streets and invested in ten liveried London taxis. They decided to plump for the taxis, which cost £50,000 for 12 months on the road, rather than 300 to 400 posters on the London Underground, for a month, at twice the price. Nick Brown, Agriculture Minister, even arrived at a recent trade fair in one of the new taxis. Another ten are on order for outside London.

The unorthodox approach seems to be paying off. In April and May this year a national press advertising campaign is planned to tie in with the arrival, months ahead of schedule, of packs of individually wrapped Fabulous Bakin' Boys muffins in the supermarkets.



Gary, left, and Jon Frank invested in liveried taxis to advertise their products. Congratulating them on their initiative is Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister

## Online banking meets key needs

BY RICHARD COLWILL

TIME and money are the two things in shortest supply in most small firms, so the arrival of online banking, with lower charges and increased flexibility and speed, promises real benefits.

About 10 per cent of small and medium-sized companies currently use online banking, but recent figures suggest that numbers are set to rise.

The most widespread online service is PC banking, which involves connecting a PC — via a modem — to a bank's mainframe computer.

Most high street banks provide a PC banking service.

Costs can vary, so it is worth

speaking to managers at the branch or by telephone.

What you get for your money with online banking is up-to-date information on account balances and recent entries, along with facilities such as making payment instructions and transfers between accounts. Downloading account information on to accounting software such as *Quicken* or *Microsoft Money*, is possible, but it is worthwhile checking the compatibility between what the bank provides and what you have installed in your PC. More complex services, such as arranging loans, still have to be done through

payments will cost an additional £15 a month. Each transfer costs either 14p or 15p.

What you get for your money with online banking is up-to-date information on account balances and recent entries, along with facilities such as making payment instructions and transfers between accounts. Downloading account information on to accounting software such as *Quicken* or *Microsoft Money*, is possible, but it is worthwhile checking the compatibility between what the bank provides and what you have installed in your PC. More complex services, such as arranging loans, still have to be done through

speaking to managers at the branch or by telephone.

However, soon some of these and other more complex transactions could be done on a computer via the Internet. Many of the high street banks are now involved in pilot projects to develop Internet-based online banking.

Internet banking avoids the restrictions of "closed" networks and lets the user form multiple links to do business with banks, customers and suppliers. The Internet will make online banking simpler and more responsive to the demands of small business — and, as in the US, charges should fall. Another advant-

## Final chance to limit risk of Budget blues

ALTHOUGH it is billed as the "Budget for Enterprise" and expected to have an overall positive impact on small firms, there are several steps that business owners can take to minimise any nasty shocks before Budget day next Tuesday (Henrietta Lake writes).

Make sure that you do not miss the boat by failing to capitalise on certain tax reliefs while they still exist. The main areas to tackle before March 9 concern possible changes to inheritance tax.

The first is business property tax relief. Many experts are predicting that it is likely to be reduced from 100 per cent to only 50 per cent, unless the shareholder has control of the company. It may also be extended to exclude a wider variety of trades along the lines of the restrictions to the relief under the Enterprise Investment Scheme. In order not to lose out on the existing levels of relief, consult an accountant about setting up a discretionary trust.

Business owners wanting to make sure that they reap the maximum benefit from the current retirement relief allowance, before it is phased out as part of the reform of capital gains tax, may also want to take action over the next seven days.

The Chancellor has stipulated that the relief will start to decrease from April 6, the start of the new tax year, but he may decide to bring this deadline forward to Budget day itself in order to guarantee revenue to the Treasury and discourage too many people from rushing to their accountants. Business owners not wishing to take the chance should crystallise gains now and make use of the full £250,000 relief by using a life interest trust.

Mike Warburton, senior tax partner at Grant Thornton, the accountant, said: "We can't predict exactly what the Chancellor will do but making some changes before next week might be worth the trouble."

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### BUSINESS FOR SALE

### BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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Trafficmaster Plc, the world's leading provider of driver information, is growing rapidly. We seek a lawyer with 2-3 years experience to help us achieve our objectives. The successful applicant must be able to demonstrate strong commercial awareness - our office is too small for ivory towers!

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Thursday 11th March  
Byron Sabol  
President: MNB Associates  
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You will be a corporate lawyer, with 5-8 years' European pge of major transactional issues, ideally with an international focus. A second language, in addition to English, and some exposure to the real estate sector would be strongly advantageous - but neither of these are pre-requisites. Crucially you will be able to work autonomously dealing with corporate aspects of significant property interests across Europe, liaising with local lawyers in each jurisdiction, and working alongside senior managers based in Amsterdam. You will enjoy strong local support, joining an established team that has recently been augmented by two senior managers from the company's head office.

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## The role

- providing general commercial advice to the projects side of the operation
- working closely with the Treasury function on big-ticket finance transactions
- attending the Main Board and managing associated internal communication
- managing the insurance concerns of the organisation, including loss-adjustment
- taking a pro-active and solutions-orientated part in new business contracting.

Please write enclosing your cv, explaining your suitability for the role and outlining current remuneration, to Juliet Shepherd, Executive Search and Selection, Ref: 2839/LA/TT, PA Consulting Group, 123 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SR, Tel: 0171-730 9000. Fax: 0171-333 5330. E-mail: [juliet.shepherd@pa-consulting.com](mailto:juliet.shepherd@pa-consulting.com)

## The person

- qualified solicitor with a minimum of 10 years' post-qualification experience
- seasoned in-house counsel with a strong track record in company/commercial law
- accustomed to exposure to top-level decision-makers, but effective at all levels
- insurance experience would be preferable
- pragmatic and solutions-orientated: mentally agile and able to prioritise clearly.

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An additional lawyer is sought to join the Legal Directorate in Luxembourg to advise on non-European lending operations in a challenging and dynamic international arena.

The successful candidate will have gained at least 3 years' post-qualification experience in banking, structured finance and investment and have the ability to handle complex finance documentation.

Candidates should be EU nationals with a good knowledge of French. Knowledge of other European languages would be an advantage. Proven drafting skills and sound judgement, in addition to energy, drive and initiative should be evident.

Our client offers an attractive salary and range of benefits.

For more information, or a confidential discussion, please contact Sian Bishop or Marian Lloyd-Jones.

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London- Major retail co seeks a 3yr + pge commercial property lawyer to join team handling a diverse workload. Rolling 6 months contract- possibly tenuring permanent.

**TELECOMS CO** 2-4yrs  
London- Opportunity for pragmatic young commercial lawyer to join major telecoms co to advise on range of complex contracts including interconnection agreements.

**EC/COMPETITION** 3-5yrs  
London- EC/competition specialist to join Blue Chip and play a vital role in advising on competition law and policy.

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Perhaps you have not yet considered making your first move but are not completely happy in the firm where you trained. We spend a lot of time talking to people in exactly the same position as you - and offer the chance for you to life is better elsewhere. Some of our candidates will end up moving, others will stay put, confident that their present firm is the best place in which to further their career. Whether you decide to move for an improved quality or variety of work, reduced hours, change in location or increase in salary, the vacancies below are just a small sample of our current instructions.

**IT/TELECOMS** NQ-2yrs  
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**CORP. KNOW HOW** Full/part time  
Unusually broad and interesting role at the medium-sized City firm. Flexible role includes general know-how, research, marketing and design & implementation of training, in addition to strong corporate experience, an outgoing personality and commercial approach are vital.

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Everybody wants to work in this West End media practice, which now has a rare opening for a junior lawyer in its litigation department. You will handle a broad blend of work including media, contracts, IP, defamation & property.

**EMPLOYMENT** 2-4yrs  
If you handle a mix of contentious and non-contentious work and would like the quality of life move, which enables you to maintain your quality of work, the opportunity to join this firm should not pass you by. City location, refreshing culture & a negligible amount of corporate support work.

**PRIVATE CLIENT/TAXATION** 2-5yrs  
This long established 15 partner City firm has a strong position among the top independent practices in the City and is not over-reliant on one particular area. A significant part of the team is sought with particular expertise in taxation. You will enjoy an unrivalled reputation and congenial environment.

**PATENTS** 4yrs+  
The City office of this national firm has a reputation for handling some of the most high profile IP work. You will have the opportunity to undertake an unusually wide variety of work, dealing with both contentious and non-contentious matters. Marketing skills are also welcomed.

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## London - overseas - industry

### Researchers / writers

Research on Chambers Directory is well underway, and yet again we have an excellent team. They are talking to lawyers and clients about trends in the profession and the merits of the various law firms. But the research keeps expanding. We need more researchers to do it.

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Michael Chambers

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### Industry

IP/IT lawyer Herts  
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Solicitor with approx 10 years' experience of leasing and financial services to join high calibre legal department of fast growing services company.

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## LAW

## Television formats and copyright protection

Who owns One Man and His Dog? Peter McInerney and David Rose assess the rules

The BBC's decision to drop *One Man and His Dog* has raised hackles among the programme's devoted viewers and prompted several broadcasters, including BSkyB and Border Television, to explore the possibility of developing their own version.

To add to the controversy, the BBC announced that it owns the rights to the programme's format, which many might assume to be in the public domain. Consequently, any third party contemplating a programme with an identical or similar format would be obliged to pay the BBC.

Television format rights are an established commodity, but they are not recognised as such in English law. Significantly, copyright cannot protect concepts or ideas *per se*. It is only when they are expressed in a permanent form, for example in committing the format to writing or developing unique props or sets, that they can be given copyright protection as artistic works. Even if a format is expressed in writing, it can be difficult to protect by copyright unless it is scripted or at least capable of performance without reference to additional materials.

The late Hughie Green's failure to establish that the format of *Opportunity Knocks* was protected by copyright in New Zealand is often cited. Nor was he able to prove that there had been any passing-off because his show had never been seen in that country.

By contrast, where scripts are integral to the format, as with sitcoms and dramas, copyright will, in most cases, provide sufficient protection because it would be difficult to lift the storylines without infringing copyright in the scripts. Accordingly, when Granada decided to sell the format of its series *Cracker*, it licensed the right to use all its elements for the production of a new version which was broadcast worldwide as *Fitz*.

In the absence of copyright protection, broadcasters can protect format rights by other means. A confidentiality agreement will give some protection to a format creator, although



Robin Page and friends can any television company run with the format of the BBC series he presents?

important players are unwilling to sign such documents.

In the case of established formats, broadcasters can rely on the law of passing-off if they can prove that the viewing public is confused into believing that the new show is, in fact, the old show or has been licensed by the original owner. Passing-off is more likely where the stars, sets and name of the original programme have been reproduced intact.

The title of any programme can be protected as a registered trademark, a policy the BBC has adopted for some of its popular shows, such as *Robin's Just a Minute*.

Efforts have been made to give greater protection to format rights. In 1996 the Department of Trade and Industry issued a consultative paper on the subject which met limited interest. One of the principal concerns was that the UK is a net importer of formats and therefore the new protections were likely to benefit overseas producers and broadcasters rather than the domestic industry. Indeed, the legal position of format owners can be said to have worsened as a result of a recent case in which the owner of an original film entitled *Joy* featuring an innovative "jump-editing" technique was zero.

unable to prevent an advertising agency from adopting a similar approach for its Guiness commercial.

Whether the BBC can do anything to prevent other television broadcasters from making a programme about sheepdog trials will depend on the BBC's existing legal rights and not any format rights as such. If no such rights exist, then the commercial rate for the format, at least from a legal point of view, is zero.

• The authors are a partner and solicitor respectively at the City law firm of SJ Berwin & Co.

WHO will take over as the top family law judge in England and Wales when Sir Stephen Brown retires in September? Bets are already being laid for the appointment, which could see a woman holding the most senior judicial post yet. Lady Justice Butler-Sloss is the most senior of the contenders, who include Lords Justices Swinton Thomas, Ward and Thorpe.

Of course, the choice could come from outside the Family Division judges. One such name being bandied about is Lord Falconer of Thoroton, although sources close to the Lord Chancellor suggest that the Dame Minister remains an outsider for this judicial post.

□ Olswang, the media law firm that represented nearly all the national newspapers in their fight against Jack Straw's injunction, may find itself in court again – in pursuit of damages for the loss suffered by *The Sunday Telegraph*, which had to remove the story from later editions. Julia Palca, who led Olswang's team, says the Home Secretary's action was pointless, because "the matter was already in the public domain". Mr Straw might be forced to justify on public interest grounds why he sought the injunction.

□ The wheels of justice by tradition grind slowly. But the latest reform should

enter the record books for legal delays. The Lord Chancellor's Department has just announced that from April, Knightsbridge Crown Court will be changing its name to Blackfriars Crown Court to reflect its present location. When did the court move from being around the corner from Harrods? Six years ago.

□ City law firms have come out in favour of one-stop shopping. The City of London Law Society has replied in its submission to the Law Society consultation exercise that rules should be relaxed so that law firms can become subsidiaries of other professional-services firms, such as accountants.

□ How can people find a good divorce lawyer? Hard on the heels of the Law Society's new family law panel of specialist solicitors comes another scheme, this time from the Solicitors' Family Law Association. More than 1,300 lawyers have applied to join and the first-registered solicitors will be named in July.

□ Solicitors are facing demands for tax they have already paid because the Inland Revenue is swamped with paperwork generated by the January 31 self-assessment deadline, says the accountancy firm Smith & Williamson. Colin Ives, a

partner, says that many tax statements sent out this week reflect underpayments although tax has been fully paid. "Watch out," he adds, "for the Revenue trying to impose non-negotiable interest penalties on any tax deemed not to have been paid by it after this month."

□ A barrister specialising in information technology work at the techie firm Tarlo Lyons has called on the Government to give businesses similar legislative protection to that enacted in Australia. A Millennium Compliance Bill is before Parliament, but without government backing, he says, it won't get far. "Every UK business could be a victim of year 2000 litigation instigated by US companies, yet they are being denied a similar remedy against US companies."

□ Judgments of the superior courts in Scotland will be put on the Internet, thanks to lobbying from the Society for Computers and the Law. The society's John Sibbald says that at last this will give "free access to this area of the law" and give the Scottish legal system a chance to compete in the global market for legal services.

□ The Solicitors' Pro Bono Group has won a coup: it has persuaded the Attorney-General to encourage government lawyers to take up *pro bono* work. Keen lawyers will be put in touch with appropriate agencies. Details: 0171-929 5601.

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## Lessons of Lawrence

## An open letter to the Prime Minister

The inquiry and the report into the murder of Stephen Lawrence make uncomfortable reading. As a lawyer and an ardent campaigner for equal rights, I, as much as anyone, wish to see the system vindicated and show that, in the fullness of time, the system works for all.

However, the way in which the murder investigation of Stephen Lawrence was handled has severely undermined the confidence in our justice system and shaken public trust in the police. The facts do not reveal a reason to celebrate any victories. The inquiry report identifies myriad fundamental errors in the investigation marred by a combination of professional incompetence, institutional racism and failure of leadership by senior officers.

The implications of the case continue to be felt. Only last week readers of *oob tabloid newspaper* were offered large cash rewards for supplying evidence leading to the conviction of Stephen Lawrence's alleged killers. Is it really acceptable to offer such rewards? Shock tactics of this type serve only to remind us of the depths to which this case has finally brought us.

Given the findings of the report, it is astonishing that it took a new Government to establish the inquiry to examine the failures. We are all indebted to Neville and Doreen Lawrence and their lawyers for their single-minded pursuit of justice against all the odds. They and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, are to be congratulated for taking the bold and courageous step to establish this inquiry. However, the challenge now facing you, Prime Minister, is to ensure that the lessons learnt are enduring ones and that the political will to tackle racism is sustained.

The investigation of the murder and the treatment of the Lawrence family were clear denials of their legitimate rights at a tragic time. This led to the great injustice of not recognising that the Lawrence family were themselves victims. There was a basic failure to recognise that racism is unacceptable behaviour in any domain – least of all in an institution intended to serve the public, regardless of ethnic credentials.

Many police officers responsible have escaped disciplinary actions because of technicalities and we are informed that they are now beyond reach. The case against those suspected of this heinous crime was never properly prepared and the suspects – other than in the failed private prosecution – continue to face trial only by media. In addition, Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, and senior officers failed

as a whole by not using the internal inquiries to send a message against racism. They missed a golden opportunity to restore confidence in an institution so reliant on the trust of the general public to remain effective.

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner has decided to complete his term of office and use it to tackle racism in his force. His task is a difficult one. His challenge now is to restore both his personal credibility and the eroded reputation of his force on these issues within his remaining time in office. The need for him to deliver on both of these should not be underestimated.

This sad case is a classic example of Britain's failure to build equality into the mainstream culture of one of our most important institutions: the police. Yet the police are not alone in this. The report's definition of institutional racism is welcome, as is the acknowledgement that it exists within many of this country's powerful organisations.

One of my past roles as the European Commission's representative on racism and xenophobia showed me that Britain has been in the lead on race relations compared with the Continent. The record has been tarnished. It is now up to you, Mr Blair, to put it right. You have a reputation for boldness and "joined-up" thinking. I urge you to use both to tackle racism, not just within the police, but in all our institutions, whether it be education, welfare, the NHS or Whitehall.

Your package of proposals of change must not be a superficial one restricted to changes in the law. I know from my five years' experience at the Equal Opportunities Commission that what really needs to change is the culture. This can be done only by a combination of leadership, sustained commitment from the top, training and retraining, regular monitoring coupled with clear, decisive and repeated disciplinary action to establish and maintain racial equality as a core value.

Above all, those in these institutions must now listen and truly understand what it means to be denied your rights or opportunities just because you are a different colour.

Only then can Britain aspire again to be a beacon on race equality and can you be remembered as a Prime Minister who truly made Britain a fairer, more equal society.

• The author formerly chaired the Equal Opportunities Commission and was the European Commission's representative on racism and xenophobia 1994-97. She is now deputy vice-president of the Law Society, and the views expressed here are her own.

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THE TIMES LAW AWARDS 1998 with ONE ESSEX COURT

# Access to justice: who pays?

First prize was awarded to **Mike Thomas** for his essay, below, on how high costs will hinder justice

**T**he cost of civil justice is excessive. In claims of between £12,500 and £25,000, average costs range from 40 to 95 per cent of the claim value and in lower value claims the costs consistently represent more than 100 per cent of the claim value. Disproportionate costs are not only inefficient but also discriminate against those with fewer resources by deterring both the poor and the risk-averse from litigating. Making the ability to vindicate rights dependent upon wealth undermines equality before the law. The withdrawal of legal aid precipitates the problem of how the price of litigation undertaken by those with limited resources is to be paid, or more accurately "underwritten", since costs are payable only on defeat.

Conditional fees are the solution of Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, to the problem of funding access to justice. Under such an arrangement, the lawyer charges his client only if the case is won, and when cases are won a success fee is charged. However, even with conditional fees, the high costs payable in the event of a loss will continue to deter the poor and risk-averse from litigating.

On losing, the client remains liable for all of her opponent's costs and her own disbursements. The proposals that the client insures against these costs encounters the problem that in a system of high and unpredictable costs, insurance is commensurately expensive — it costs £8,000 to insure against bringing medical negligence claims to trial.

Introducing a conditional fee system without reducing the cost of litigation merely



Winners: the overall victor was Mike Thomas, pictured between Lord Irvine, and Peter Stothard, Editor of The Times, and Anthony Grabiner, QC

transfers the problem of excessive costs deterring litigation from plaintiffs to their lawyers and achieves nothing. The success fee's function is to compensate the lawyer for those cases that he loses. In our system, costs are high, relative to the claim, so any success fee recovered, capped at 25 per cent of the award, will be small, relative to the costs incurred. If costs equal three quarters of the value of the claim, then a lawyer litigating similar claims must win three quarters of cases to "break even".

Unless the costs of litigating are reduced or lawyers are prepared to earn less, only very strong claims will obtain access to justice. Solicitors have already been advised that "conditional fee" medical negligence work should not be touched with a bargepole".

The acid test for conditional fees is not whether they work in cases where the risk of non-recovery is low (and the cost in legal aid has been small), but whether they can bring claims less certain of success into the

system. The bottom line is profit: the attractiveness of a case depends upon the potential fee on success balanced against the risk of non-recovery and the amount of investment necessary in bringing the claim.

In America it seems that claims where success is not guaranteed but higher damages offer greater rewards. In our system lower awards make uncertain claims less attractive, especially those for smaller sums where the costs are increasingly disproportionate. To increase damages is inefficient so to facilitate access to justice we must decrease the cost of litigation.

The hourly rate will continue alongside conditional fees. Defence lawyers have obvious difficulties in operating conditional fee arrangements and will continue to work on hourly rates, as in America. Further, a plaintiff's ability to

come to court is fundamental to the rule of law and cannot be dependent upon her finding a lawyer prepared to work on a conditional fee basis. Justice is not concerned only with money: the vindication of rights has its own value.

Actions where money is not claimed — for example, applications for judicial review or actions to compel due administration of a trust — are less amenable to conditional fees. The costs of litigation must therefore be cut to enable those dependent on hourly fees to obtain access to justice. Conversely, only appropriate procedures must be allowed in order to prevent rich defendants gaining an unfair advantage by investing disproportionate amounts on an hourly rate while the plaintiff's lawyer is trying to work efficiently on a conditional fee basis.

The success fee compensates

lawyers for representing unsuccessful plaintiffs; as the new price of access to justice, it raises the question of who should ultimately pay it. If success fees are deducted from damages, then successful plaintiffs are subsidising access to justice and the system is failing to provide full compensation and to protect rights fully.

The Lord Chancellor accordingly proposes that success fees be recoverable as costs from the defendant.

One contrary argument is that if the plaintiff chooses to opt for a conditional fee arrangement through imprudence such losses are not recoverable. Nevertheless, the Lord Chancellor's proposal is preferable: wrongs give rise to a duty to make full compensation and the plaintiff should receive this provided he acts reasonably in bringing his action.

Those defendants wrongfully denying liability and forcing the plaintiff to litigate to recover his due should have to pay for the steps the plaintiff must reasonably take. Making

wrongdoers pay more also provides a greater deterrent to adherence to the norms of behaviour required by law.

Further, it is better to give plaintiffs full compensation explicitly than to achieve this by distorting the law of damages to take account of irrecoverable costs, as is apparently practice in America.

The expansion of conditional fee arrangements is inevitable and is to be welcomed as it encourages efficiency in order to secure a reasonable return for time invested. However, conditional fees can only succeed in securing access to justice if the costs of litigation are reduced and conditional fees alone will not achieve this.

Until costs are reduced, many good cases will remain insufficiently attractive to be undertaken on a conditional fee basis, with the result that, where the taxpayer is unable to underwrite the price of access to justice, society will suffer the cost of individual rights and collective behavioural norms going unenforced.

## Words of praise from Irvine

The big prizes and a special award: **Frances Gibb** reports

**T**he success of legal reforms in which lawyers can take on most disputes over money or damages on a "no win, no fee" basis depends on the cost of litigation being reduced, the Lord Chancellor said last week.

Lord Irvine of Lairg was

quoting from the winning essay in the 1998 Times Law Awards competition, written by Mike Thomas, a student at University College, Oxford.

Mr Thomas won the top

prize of £3,000

from more than

150 entries in the

competition, held with

the One Essex Court

chambers of Anthony Grabiner, QC.

Lord Irvine, who presented

the prizes at a reception at

Lincoln's Inn, headed

the judging team, which included Lord

Browne-Wilkinson, the senior

law lord. Mr

Grabiner and Susanna Fitzgerald, a member

of his chambers, and Peter Stothard,

the Editor of The Times.

The topic for essays in this year's competition was "Access to justice — who pays the price?"

would mean a new culture, where "proportionality" is the key to pursuing just dispute resolution".

The reforms also demonstrated how wider costs than legal aid were involved. "Judges have been working through a demanding programme of training, to enable them to fulfil their unprecedented new case management responsibilities."

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The second prize of £2,000 went to Sarah Palin, of West London, who is training to be a barrister at the Inns of Court School of Law, and the third prize of £1,000 to Suzana Sava, a Romanian student studying law at the London School of Economics.

The three runners-up who received £250 each were David Lewis, Andrea Markham, and Alastair Laddin. A special prize of £100 was awarded to Rachael Levene, 17, a pupil at Nottingham High School for Girls.

### Only very strong claims will be taken on

lawyers for representing unsuccessful plaintiffs; as the new price of access to justice, it raises the question of who should ultimately pay it. If success fees are deducted from damages, then successful plaintiffs are subsidising access to justice and the system is failing to provide full compensation and to protect rights fully.

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New York based law firm is looking for UK or US qualified senior capital markets/securities lawyers. This international practice is particularly strong in this field (especially emerging markets) and can offer both senior assistants and partners a first rate client base and excellent work, as well as being very financially rewarding. Candidates should be from a top City firm and although languages are not essential they would be an advantage. Ref: T.02555N

**1 Year - Senior** to £100,000  
Major City law firm is looking to expand its well respected Brussels office with the addition of a junior, mid-ranking and senior lawyer. The firm has an excellent reputation in the fields of EC and competition law reflected by its increasing workload and its current need to expand the office. A first rate opportunity for candidates wishing to relocate to Brussels. Ref: T.02521N

**Senior** circa £160,000  
If you are looking for an opportunity to move out of the major firm environment and play a key role in respect of the development of your department then this excellent City practice with a focus on commercial property is an attractive choice. Clients include major property institutions, companies, banks, landlords and retailers. A following is necessary as an indication of market standing. Ref: T.02273L

**4 Years + PQE** £90,000  
This is one of the pre-eminent firms in banking and international finance. Specialising in aviation, general finance and leasing (including film finance) the firm boasts a strong market presence in these fields. Increased workload has now resulted in the need for a talented finance lawyer with at least four years PQE. The firm offers the full scope of finance work and financial institutions. This is an excellent opportunity to expand your finance experience on an international scale. Ref: T.02268K

**3 Years + PQE** £65,000  
Major City practice now seeks a key professional support lawyer to co-ordinate a major marketing and internal research role. You will be involved in both internal and external know-how, the creation of precedents, detailed research, as well as training issues and marketing to clients and cross selling within the firm. In return you should have at least three years PQE in tax at a strong practice. You will require a high degree of commercial awareness but in return the opportunity to grow into the role is available. Ref: T.02620L

**Blue Chip Organisation, Sussex** £160,000 + excellent benefits  
One of the UK's leading Blue Chip companies is looking to appoint a senior IP lawyer. Having gained extensive IP experience the candidate will be responsible for the company's portfolio of trademarks, copyright and patent rights globally. Responsibility will also include pursuing any litigation which should arise. This is an exceptional opportunity for a senior lawyer looking for a new challenge with an outstanding organisation. Languages would also be an advantage. Ref: T.02655L

**6 - 8 Years + bonus** £80,000 + excellent + bonus  
One of Europe's leading investment banks is looking to expand its derivatives operation and appoint a Head of Department. The candidate should have a first class background covering both capital markets and derivatives (mainly equity) and will have been exposed to bonds, hybrid instruments and warrants. Operating at a strategic level the candidate will be encouraged to undertake a "hands on" approach to their work. Ref: T.02621L

**Part** £ excellent + benefits  
One of the world's leading financial service organisations is looking to recruit a Head of Department for its Paris office. Managing a team of forward thinking, multi-cultural, first class lawyers, the candidate will have had previous management experience as well as having an outstanding professional and academic background. Experience should include corporate and banking work which should have been gained from either a top five firm anywhere in the world or from a major blue chip organisation. Fluency in French and at least one other language is also essential. Ref: T.02622E

For more information in complete confidence please contact Helen Bryant, Lynn Bowden or  
Tanya Foster for private practice, or Steve Stansfield for in-house. Tel: 0171 417 1444. Email: [helenb@garfieldrobbins.co.uk](mailto:helenb@garfieldrobbins.co.uk)

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## RUGBY LEAGUE

# Wakefield banking on survival

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THEY were taking the floodlights down at Belle Vue yesterday, which looked an ominous sign, but it was to replace dead bulbs. Crumbling terraces are being patched up and Wakefield Trinity Wildcats, who qualify already as the biggest mauler in the JJB Super League, are as ready as they can be for their re-entry to the top flight on Sunday.

The compromise of having two nicknames sums up the problem of being caught twixt the old and new at Wakefield, a founding member of the Northern Union in 1895. Do supporters shout for "Trinity", "Wildcats" or plain old "Wakey"? More worryingly, will there be a team to support after what is widely seen as a make-or-break season?

Andy Kelly, the Wakefield coach and one of the few recognisable faces left after an overhaul that was designed to ensure competitiveness, is under no illusions. "The first target has to be survival," he said. "That's vital not only to the players and me as coach, but to the club's existence." Sainsbury's has faith. Yesterday, the supermarket chain announced a joint sponsorship over two years in a £600,000 deal with a local shopping centre.

Wakefield's fellow Super League clubs, who each receive £750,000 annually under their revised television contract, have left them to get by on £575,000 from their former



Kelly: character

**David Powell on a rule change that threatens to erase the exploits of a cherished Olympian**

**D**ene Lewis may just win the heptathlon world championship in Seville this summer. She may even register the highest score of the year, just as she did in 1998, when she won European and Commonwealth titles. If she does, the golden girl of British sport will have more reason than most to stay up until midnight on December 31 to celebrate the millennium.

When the clock strikes 12, Lewis could be the new world record-holder for her event. Whether she would consider it worthy of celebration will depend on how she views the insensitive decision by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) to wipe out Jackie Joyner-Kersee's existing world record at the end of the year.

This is not because, belatedly, Joyner-Kersee has been found guilty of any drugs offence, in the manner of Ben Johnson. After Johnson failed a drugs test at the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, he was not only stripped of the 100 metre gold medal and world record, but one year later, the IAAF erased the world record that he had set at the 1987 world championships. Joyner-Kersee's record is being dropped for no better reason than a minor alteration to the specifications of the women's javelin.

This is not an unimportant world record, one of the many that are set today, forgotten tomorrow — it is one that was set at an Olympic Games 11 years ago by the most successful woman all-rounder the world has seen. "It is imprudent, although I suppose I could say idiotic, for track and field to remove from the record books one of its most cherished names," Craig Mashack, the executive director of USA Track and Field, the sport's governing body in the United States, said.

The significance of the record was emphasised by the attitude of American television at the time. The final event, the 800 metres, was

scheduled to take place 15 minutes after NBC went off air, but the channel decided to stay with the action to see if Joyner-Kersee could create history. She duly delivered a score of 7,291 points.

Performances with the new javelin, with the centre of gravity moved three centimetres forward to allow more regular landings on the tip, will be kept from April 1. The best mark by December 31 will become the new world record from January 1, 2000. The change to the javelin is likely to reduce distances achieved by the best heptathletes by a mere three to four metres, a loss of 50 to 60 points. Had Joyner-Kersee been using the new javelin in Seoul, she would still have scored more than 7,200 points.

As Richard Hymans, the joint-compiler of the IAAF book *Progression of World Best Performances and Official IAAF World Records*, said: "Quite clearly, there is no one around who can score over 7,000 points and yet somebody may be credited with a world record for an inferior performance." Lewis's

British record is 6,736 points and, while 7,000 may soon be within range, 7,200 may be beyond her this season.

Mashack added: "The way it is being seen by the American public is that here you have one of track and field's all-time greats and some bureaucrats in Monaco have chosen, for their own purposes, to make it so that she is out of world record-holder."

USA Track and Field is planning a protest to the IAAF and, to understand its indignation, think back to Daley Thompson. How

far has the world record been broken?

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## RACING: BHB TO REVIEW WEIGHT-FOR-AGE ALLOWANCES FOR CHASERS

## Youngsters face scales of justice

By CHRIS MCGRATH

SHORT of offering them use of a special ramp over the fences and conveyor belts in between, it is hard to imagine how five-year-old chasers might be more grossly favoured than by the present weight-for-age scale.

The dilemma remains, he said. "The idea is to encourage people to bring along store horses, to race their young, immature horses without breaking their hearts or backs. The problem is that horses in Britain and Ireland tend to be rather different from those coming out of France, where they tend to be already well raced."

In setting a weight-for-age scale, the question is how to take account of the form these horses have shown early in life without having a detrimental effect on the more traditional, slower maturing types. The high-profile example of horses like Makounji — who got all the allowances on Saturday, including the mares' allowance — is there for all to see. There is clearly a need to re-examine the scale before next season.

The problem has arisen because of an increasing vogue for French jumpers. Trainers tend to educate young horses with considerably more purpose over the Channel, ensuring that French imports are correspondingly more precocious than their indigenous rivals. The latter might well prove better off in terms of racecourse longevity, but to begin with the French novices can know too many tricks for them.

Martin Pipe, always one jump ahead, was first to spot the opportunity for French horses, making hay last season with Cyfor Malta. This time he has excellent prospects of matching that horse's Cheltenham Festival success with Majadou, one of Pipe's French imports, will be a popular order at Cheltenham



Majadou, right, one of Pipe's French imports, will be a popular order at Cheltenham

## RACING AHEAD

Robert Wright  
suggests the best value in the ante-post market

TOTE CHELTENHAM GOLD CUP  
Cheltenham, March 19

## GUIDE TO THE LEADING PRICES

	Course	Distance	Prize
Teetot Mill	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Florrie Pearl	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Dorina Prive	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Escarafougue	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Double Thriller	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Unsinkable Boxer	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Sunny Bay	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
See More Business	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Hanshalm	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Simply Dashing	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Cool Dawn	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000
Go Battibebe	1m 2f	110yd (7)	£10,000

THE Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup has been billed as a clash between Florida Poids and Teetot Mill. However, as the past two winners, Mr Mulligan (20-1) and Cool Dawn (25-1) have shown, the outcome of jumping's Blue Riband is rarely so easily predicted.

Double Thriller, twice a Festival winner already, is clearly a horse of immense talent. The only slight reservation is his stamina, he found less in the closing stages than had appeared likely when beating Elenortheque in the Royal & Tata Chase over a slightly shorter, 3½ furlong test.

Teetot Mill has stormed through the ranks since joining

Teetot Mill, having enough speed to cope with a shorter trip at Ascot last time. He defeated the bunch of Double Thriller's rivals in the chase at Cheltenham last April. The struggle up the hill, however, did not go in his favour.

Double Thriller may also have improved for a switch to a more natural yard, moving from Pipe's stables from the track to the racing circuit, but hung his first post when beaten at Stratford last May. His supporters may be best to wait and see if the Cheltenham going is suitable.

See More Business also improved by Nichols, started second favourite in last year's renewal but was forced off the track by Cyborg, who was pulled up early on. Whinny the King George, last season, has disappointed off the pace, but was untroubled by the slow early pace when third to Cyfor Malta at Cheltenham last time and connections believe that he failed to cope with heavy ground at Kempton on his penultimate start. Reportedly back in good form now, SEE MORE BUSINESS is over-priced at 25-1 with Hills and Ladbrokes and warrants each-way support.

## 3.00 RIPPON SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,262, 2m 3f) (21 runners)

	Course	Distance	Prize
401 4-2155 CLARENSHAW 26 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
402 4-2404 SUPREME TARGET 17 (F,P) & Partners 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
403 010-0204 MURKIN 40 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
404 SP2002 PANORMAS LORD 05 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
405 216095 KING PRINCE 32 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
406 4-2003 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
407 4603 PALISANDER 25 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
408 44031P JANIS 47 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
409 4-2003 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
410 4-2003 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
411 00-005 LANCAR 38 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
412 02-0202 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
413 4-2003 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
414 4-2003 BIRTHPLACE 55 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
415 4-2003 SPANNING CROWN 39 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
416 00-005 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
417 00-005 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
418 04-005 RUMBLE 20 (G,F,D,F,S) (D) Barrell C Dayes 7-11-12 M H Naughton (5)	7f	100	
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Anelka swerves past Given and scores Arsenal's only goal at St James' Park on Sunday. In his present form, how can any Fantasy League manager be without him?

## Pearce locates target to hammer his point home

**O**n previous FA Cup weekends, the small number of matches affecting *The Times* Fantasy League has not made it worthwhile to award weekly or On-Target prizes. This week, however, a total of six FA Carling Premiership games are being played, so there will be no "rollover" of prizes to the following week.

Today we announce the winner of the prize of £1,000 plus £100 worth of Puma sports equipment awarded to the Fantasy manager of the month, in addition to the £500 prize for the team of the week (opposite). Our aim, misguided perhaps, is give our Fantasy player of the week award to a different player each week. The logic behind this decision is that readers of these pages probably know all they need to about stars such as Dwight Yorke, Nicolas Anelka and Andy Cole, whose regular high scoring means they are often candidates for the award; therefore we prefer to draw their attention to other, lesser-known names who might be worth a place in their Fantasy team.

Occasionally, we permit ourselves a smug smile as one of our previous winners comes up with another sparkling seven days: on Saturday, for example, George Boateng, the Coventry City midfield player, our award-winner a while ago, scored twice in his team's 4-1 away win over Aston Villa.

His team-mate, John Aloisi, also netted twice, and was considered for this week's title, but his first-team appearances tend to be limited, so we have picked another relatively unsung hero who is first choice for his club.

This steady central defender is one of only two players at Upton Park to hold an FA Carling Premiership winner's medal (Ian Wright, formerly with Arsenal, is the other), earned when he was in the Blackburn Rovers squad that took the title in 1995. On Saturday, Ian Pearce (for it he) scored against his former employers, and helped keep them out at the other end, to earn six Fantasy League points.



Pearce is not a consistent goalscorer: all the more remarkable, then, that Saturday's was the second West Ham home game in succession in which he has appeared at the far post to score from open play. Against Nottingham Forest a fortnight ago, he volleyed in a Frank Lampard cross from the left, and against Blackburn, met a far post cross from Paolo Di Canio on the right to send a header past John Filan. When Rovers launched their comeback attempt in the second half, he stood firm in his usual position on the right of the back three.

Pearce began his career with Chelsea and made four appearances as substitute before joining Blackburn for £300,000 in 1993. Almost four years later, his value

had increased to £1,600,000 when he arrived at Upton Park, but that still represents a bargain buy by Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, who has seen the reliable Pearce help his side into contention for European qualification. Inflation and his consistent level of performance in a winning team means that he will cost £3.1 million, but for your money you are getting a sound defender who has, it seems, discovered where the goal is.  For legal reasons, *The Times* Fantasy League is no longer able to accept entries from players under 18 years of age. Players 17 years and under already registered in the main and youth leagues will, however, be allowed to remain in the competition.

### PRIZES

- £5,630 to the top Fantasy League manager, plus a trip for two to the European Cup final
- £30,300 to the runner-up
- £5,000 for third place
- £3,000 monthly prizes: eight prizes of £1,000, plus £100 of Puma sports equipment
- £500 weekly prizes: 36 prizes of £500, plus £100 of Puma sports equipment
- £500 youth prize, plus monthly prizes of a Premiership football shirt
- £500 weekly On-Target prize

### HOW TO ENTER YOUR FANTASY LEAGUE TEAM

Select a team of 11 Premiership players from those listed right. The total value of your team must not exceed £50m and you cannot choose more than one player from the same Premiership club. Your team must be in a 4-4-2 formation with: one goalkeeper; two full-backs; two centre-backs; four midfielders; and two forwards.

**TO ENTER BY POST** Name your team on the entry form, left, in no more than 16 characters. Enter the correct three-digit player codes from the list, right, followed by the players' names. Enter the first three characters of each player's team under the heading CLUB, ie, LEE for Leeds. Also enter the value of each player shown on the list right. Add up the values of the 11 players in your

team and make sure the total does not exceed £50m. Send your entry to the address shown, with a cheque/PO for £2.50 (£10 sterling outside UK or ROI) or your credit-card details. You will get confirmation of your team and your personal identity number (PIN) on receipt of your entry form. Readers under 18 should seek parental permission before entering. They must state their date of birth and indicate if they wish to enter our Youth League.

**LUCKY DIP** If you would like us to select a team at random for you, please tick the Lucky Dip box on the entry form. Postal entries only.

**TO ENTER BY PHONE** Call 0640 625 28 99 (+44 870 901 4209 outside the UK) using a touch-

tone (DTMF) phone and when prompted tap in your 11 three-digit player codes. You will be asked to give the name of your team (no more than 16 characters). You will then be given a 10-digit PIN, make sure you write this down and keep it safe to be able to check your team's progress and make transfers. Calls last about seven minutes. 0640 calls are 60p per minute. Calls from outside the UK are charged at national rates.

**Calls from payphones cost approximately double.**



Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime tel \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

MasterCard  Visa  Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Supply address of registered cardholder on separate sheet if different from above. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Send with £2.50 entry fee (£10 sterling for entrants outside the UK or ROI) to: The Times Fantasy League, Abacus House, Dudley St, London, SE1 1ZC 1222

1. On which days do you usually buy The Times?  Monday  Tuesday  Wednesday

2. Which other national daily newspaper(s) do you buy at least once a week?

3. Which Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy almost always (3-4 copies per month)?

4. Which Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy quite often (1-2 copies per month)?

If you do not wish to receive other offers from Times Newspapers Limited, please tick box:

THE TIMES MAIN FANTASY LEAGUE ENTRY FORM				
Submit your entry as soon as possible to maximise your point-scoring opportunities				
FANTASY TEAM NAME (up to 10 characters)				
LUCKY DIP If you wish to have your team selected by us at random, tick box: <input type="checkbox"/>				
CODE	GOALKEEPER NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
1	m			£ m
CODE	FULL-BACK NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
2	m			£ m
CODE	FULL-BACK NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
3	m			£ m
CODE	CENTRE-BACK NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
4	m			£ m
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5	m			£ m
CODE	MIDFIELDER NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
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7	m			£ m
CODE	MIDFIELDER NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
8	m			£ m
CODE	FORWARD NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
9	m			£ m
CODE	FORWARD NAME	CLUB	NAME	VALUE
10	m			£ m
MAXIMUM OF ONE PLAYER PER PREMIERSHIP TEAM				
TOTAL VALUE (MAX £50m) £				

I also wish to enter the Youth League (please tick)

I was under 18 on August 15, 1998. Date of birth:

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Checkup/PDO (payable to: Times Newspapers Ltd) \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

MasterCard  Visa  Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

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### CHOOSE YOUR PLAYERS FROM HERE

Columns show: code, name, club, weekly total points, total points, valuation (£m)	400	S. Bergqvist	AST	0	0
GOALKEEPERS	401	F. Townsend	AST	0	0
146 A. Mannone	402	I. Heslop	AST	0	0
139 M. Boruc	403	M. Schubert	AST	0	0
140 B. Balenec	404	J. White	AST	0	0
108 J. Flanagan	405	J. Cudic	AST	0	0
127 A. Flinders	406	T. Sherrard	AST	0	0
104 E. Heslop	407	D. Marshall	AST	0	0
105 A. Patterson	408	C. Stewart	AST	0	0
134 B. Raynes	409	S. Parker	AST	0	0
136 E. de Oca	410	M. Chapman	AST	0	0
107 S. Osgood	411	E. Hart	AST	0	0
109 M. Heath	412	M. Hetherington	AST	0	0
153 B. Peeter	413	J. Whitehead	AST	0	0
124 S. Stoenescu	414	P. McNaughton	AST	0	0
114 T. Myhill	415	M. Delap	AST	0	0
120 J. Walker	416	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
111 S. Goss	417	M. Gullit	AST	0	0
125 B. Johnson	418	E. Horvath	AST	0	0
126 J. Robinson	419	C. Peplow	AST	0	0
124 P. Armer	420	G. McAllister	AST	0	0
143 B. Frields	421	L. Delap	AST	0	0
116 P. Schmeichel	422	D. Peacock	AST	0	0
122 B. Deeney	423	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
120 B. Roberts	424	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
121 S. Parker	425	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
122 S. Parker	426	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
123 S. Parker	427	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
124 S. Parker	428	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
125 S. Parker	429	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
126 S. Parker	430	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
127 S. Parker	431	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
128 S. Parker	432	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
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148 S. Parker	452	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
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153 S. Parker	457	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
154 S. Parker	458	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
155 S. Parker	459	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
156 S. Parker	460	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
157 S. Parker	461	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
158 S. Parker	462	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
159 S. Parker	463	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
160 S. Parker	464	P. Mulligan	AST	0	0
161 S.					





## Wasps tie might have sting in its tail

By MARK SOUTER

GLOUCESTER lodged a complaint with the Rugby Football Union (RFU) last night over the proposed decision to switch their Telleys Bitter Cup semi-final against Wasps from Good Friday to Easter Sunday.

Although the RFU is expected to adjudicate today, Gloucester do not believe that Wasps should be allowed to move the fixture simply because Queen's Park Rangers, with whom they ground share, are playing a Nationwide league first division match at Loftus Road on Easter Saturday.

John Hall, a club director, said: "Wasps knew the criteria for the draw well beforehand. If they could not play at home on Friday, they should have gone into the hat as an

### SEMI-FINALS

**Wasps v Gloucester**  
Date and venue to be confirmed  
**Richmond v Newcastle**  
Meades Stadium, April 3

away team only." BSkyB had scheduled the two semi-finals, the second between Richmond and Newcastle at the Meadeski Stadium on April 2 and 3. After a day of negotiations between Wasps and Twickenham that latter also involved Tom Walkinshaw, the Gloucester owner, it seemed that April 4 with a 2.15pm start, was an ideal solution given that BSkyB, the television company, was happy to be flexible.

Originally, the RFU had wanted to stage both semi-finals as a double-header at Twickenham, but when that proved to be an unviable proposition, neutral venues were suggested, a scenario with which the clubs did not concur. After much horse-trading, home ties were accepted as long as the respective stadiums had a minimum capacity of 8,000. That presented a problem for Newcastle, whose ground holds only 6,000. Fortunately, they were drawn away.

In Wales, Cardiff and Swansea face possible expulsion from the SWALEC Cup after they failed to meet a deadline of last Sunday to pay fines of £150,000 imposed by the Wales Rugby Union for playing unofficial cross-border fixtures with leading English clubs. The general committee of the Welsh Rugby Union will discuss their fate on Thursday week.

## Wales summon flanker bred in New Zealand

By MARK SOUTER

### DETAILS

WALES v France in Paris, March 6: S Howarth (Sant), M Roberts (Swansea), D Jones (Pontypool), N Jenkins (Pontypool), R Howley (Cardiff, captain), P Rogers (London), G Jones (Sheffield), S Williams (Cardiff), C Garside (Richmond), C Myatt (Llanelli), C Chevill (Swansea), B Shattock (Neath), G Edwards (Cardiff), N Garside (Llanelli), D Lovell (Ebbw Vale), M Voyle (Llanelli), L Williams (Cardiff), A Lewis (Cardiff), B Williams (Richmond).

ENGLAND SQUAD: N Ireland in Dublin, March 8: Stooke, N Steel (Northampton), M Perry (Bath), D Rees (Sale), D Lupton (Cardiff), S Lewis (Cardiff), S Garside (Cardiff), M Catt (Bath), P Grayson (Northampton), M Dawson (Northampton), N Garside (Cardiff), P Garside (Llanelli), V Ubogu (Bath), H Cockerill (Llanelli), N Lovell (Cardiff), N Morris (Cardiff), D Greenock (Scarborough), I Dallaglio (Wasps, captain), N Beck (Leicester), R Hill (Scarborough), M Corry (Leicester).

tight head. He is replaced by Ben Evans. Jenkins's Swansea colleague, who will begin an international for the first time, Robert Howley remains the captain in an unchanged back division. Allan Bateman, who is fit again, is among the replacements.

Sinkinson's rise to prominence is remarkable by any standard. He was spotted by Lynn Jones, the Neath coach, himself a former Wales No 7, playing last summer in

Christchurch and, in conversations after the game, revealed he was Wales-qualified.

With Sinkinson's path blocked to a place in the All Blacks team, Jones had little trouble enticing the player to Neath, where he quickly established himself at club and representative level. He has played twice for Wales A this season.

"Brett has an ability to read the game which others here don't have. His tackling is second to none but it is his work after the tackle situation that marks him out," Jones said yesterday.

Rogers, of whom Henry is a keen admirer, would have made his Wales debut against South Africa last autumn had he not suffered a serious knee ligament injury. Rogers, born in Maidstone, of a Welsh father, has not been able to regain his club place from Neil Hatley, but that has not deterred Henry, who, on the back of a powerhouse performance against Ireland A at Donnybrook, had no hesitation in selecting him.

"It will be a huge challenge, but one you have to look forward to," Rogers said yesterday.

Another prop enjoying a new lease of life is Victor Ubogu, of Bath, who was called up yesterday into the 22-man England squad which leaves for the match in Dublin this morning. Ubogu, 34, and the holder of 21 caps, is the one change, coming in for Graham Rowntree, who is injured. Clive Woodward, the coach, said: "I considered Will Green, who remains in my plans, but Victor's selection is based on his excellent club form and his proven experience at this level." The team will be announced tomorrow.

Peter Rogers, of London Irish, another debutant, comes in at loose head for Darren Morris, after recovering from a knee ligament injury that kept him out of rugby for four months. Garin Jenkins, capped 39 times, made a visible difference as a replacement at Wembley and now starts ahead of Barry Wilkins, while David Young's suspect fitness rules him out at

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## ROWING

# Cambridge aim to hit the heights

By MIKE ROSEWELL, ROWING CORRESPONDENT

BRAD CROMBIE, the Cambridge president, and Charlie Humphreys, his Oxford counterpart, breathed a sigh of relief yesterday when, at the Boat Race crew announcement, they were able to name themselves as participants in the race this year on April 3. Over the past three years, two Cambridge presidents and one from Oxford have had to confront the Press with the news that they had not made the "cut".

The Boat Race can be watched by a potential overseas audience of 400 million and the fact that ten of the 18 athletes named yesterday were non-British is likely to add to the international interest. Against that, those who argue that the Boat Race should be a nursery for Great Britain internationals should note that of the other eight, coxes included, seven are already on the Britain international ladder, two at senior level, three at under-23 level and two among the juniors.

The only exception is Vian Sharif, the Cambridge woman cox. Add to this the fact that six competitors out of the two crews have achieved full senior international status, with five different countries, and the Boat Race can justifiably be called an international event, although it is on a course far from international requirements.

Oxford have picked up most of the internationals this year in their quest to stop a run of six Cambridge wins and so become the first winners of the Aberdeen Asset Management Trophy. Their boat includes three former Blues — Henrik Nilsson, a Sweden international, Andrew Lindsay, of Britain, and Humphreys.

The newcomers are impressive: there are three full senior internationals in Colin von Ettingshausen, from Germany, Martin Crotty, of the United States — who was the strongest from either squad when he won the British under-23 indoor championships last November — and Morgan Crooks, of Canada. Add to these Toby Ayer, of the United States, three an-

is performer, and Dan Snow, the youngest man in the boat at 20, and the line-up looks solid, a fact emphasised by the fact that James Roycroft and Nick Robinson, the stroke, both members of the last Oxford crew last year, have failed to make it. Neil O'Donnell, the American cox, earned his spurs by steering Isis to victory last year.

Cambridge have three former Blues among their number. Brad Crombie, a Canada international, is coming to his third Boat Race, having rowed on different sides in 1997 and 1998. Graham Smith, who competed for Britain at the Olympic Games in 1996, and Toby Wallace, a home-grown Cambridge product, are both in line for their second Blues.

Robin Williams, the Cambridge coach, has shown his liking for height with his selection. The Cambridge line-up is the tallest ever, with Josh West, of the United States, setting an individual Boat Race record at 6ft 9in. Kieran West, an under-23 world championships gold medal-winner for Britain, is only an inch shorter, but his lean frame has strength, as his second place behind Crotty in the British indoor championships proved.

David Ellis, the second American in the Cambridge crew, came to the Light Blues' notice when his Harvard crew beat them at Henley last year. He has been forgiven and assimilated. Tim Wooge has represented Germany at under-23 level. The line-up is completed by Tom Stoddard, Cambridge's youngest performer and a junior world championship bronze medal-winner for Britain in 1996.

Both crews have pace and potential, although only Oxford have shown this in public, when they beat Molesey ten days ago. The build-up starts in earnest this weekend, when Cambridge race London Rowing Club and Oxford confront Tideway Scullers. Neither coach has finalised the crew order for this, the 145th Boat Race.



Long, short and uniquely tall: Sharif, the Cambridge cox, is flanked by Kieran West, left, and Josh West, the tallest Boat Race oarsman

OXFORD UNIVERSITY	
*T J Wallace (King Edward VI, Southampton and Jesus), 22, 6ft 7in, 15st 7lb (bow)	
T A Stoddard (Oundle and Jesus), 20, 6ft 3½in, 13st 6lb	
*P E B Crombie (Crescent, Toronto, McGill Univ and Peterhouse), 28, 6ft 6in, 15st 4lb	
A J West (Santa Fe Preparatory, New Mexico, Yale and Celus), 22, 6ft 9in, 15st 2lb	
D O M Ellis (Milton Acad, Harvard and Trinity), 23, 6ft 5in, 14st 6lb	
K M West (Dulwich and Christ's), 21, 6ft 8in, 14st 11lb	
*G D C R Smith (Westminster, University College London and St Edmund's), 23, 6ft 3½in, 14st 5lb	
T Wooge (Otto-Pankok-Schule, Dortmund, Uni, Northeastern Univ, US and Magdeburg), 25, 6ft 7¾in, 15st 4lb (stroke)	
Cox: V Sharif (Lady Eleanor Holles and Clare), 19, 5ft, 7st 6lb	

\*denotes Blue

The order of the crews have not been finalised

## Maggert makes matchplay million

Greetings from La Costa, where Jeff Maggert chipped in from 20ft to pocket \$1 million, the biggest cheque of his life, in the inaugural Andersen Consulting Match Play Championship on Sunday. Money, money, money. "I thought about the money all day," Andrew Magee, who lost to Maggert at the second extra hole in the 36-hole final said. Poor Magee. He won only \$500,000.

If your pockets are deeply lined and you covet a facial for £60, La Costa is the place for you. A playground for the rich, its fairways are ringed by houses of every size and type and its clanging tills and extensive facilities put one in mind of The Belfry — although when last seen, there was no one there offering to slap some goo on your face for £30 a cheek and label it "therapeutic mud that has a 40,000 year union with nature and time".

At this time of the year, the temperature varies by 40° between midnight and midday. The players in the first event of the World Golf Championship blew hot and cold, too. Though the tournament was a welcome addition to the calendar, it would benefit from some fine tuning before it returns here next year.

At \$30 a day, the tickets were expensive, which might account for the comparatively small crowds. There were more spectators watching Sergio Garcia win the final of the Amateur Championship at Muirfield last summer than watched any one of the matches on the first day. There was never any difficulty in being able to see from behind the ropes, even if the match involved Tiger Woods.

One of the truisms of golf is



JOHN HOPKINS

that, in strokeplay events, the best players win those tournaments held on the most difficult courses. The course here was not difficult enough.

Indeed, it would have been better to have played one round on Friday and two on Saturday, but television wanted to build in some spare time at the weekend in case the weather was bad. That consideration apart, playing the

quarter-finals and semi-finals on Saturday would have been more exciting and might have done more to draw the crowds. A British voice, one steeped in the lore of matchplay, would have added an extra dimension to the television coverage of ABC.

Nevertheless, this tournament bore out the basic truth of matchplay conducted over 18 holes, namely that it is an

imprecise science. Almost everyone had an opinion as to why there had been such a culling of seeds that the final was played between the world No 24 and No 50 in a field of 64. The most common verdict was "that's matchplay", although Steve Pate put it rather better.

"Matchplay is good for me," Pate, a losing semi-finalist, said. "I figure I've got a better chance of beating these guys over one day than I have over four." Over a beer, Dave Musgrave, the Englishman who caddied for Lee Janzen, was asked whether the players were enjoying the event.

Musgrave rubbed his face and pondered the question. "They seemed to," he said. "All I know is how Lee and [Phil] Mickelson came off the 8th green talking and laughing to themselves about how the holes had gone first this way, then that. They liked that."

To many Americans, matchplay is incomprehensible, like cricket, the House of Lords and the geographical division of the home countries. "I'm from Wales," Ian Woosnam said when he checked in at a tournament recently. "Ah yes," the American lady said. "That's in England, right?"

The scoreboard for one early match in the tournament described the leader as being "Up one". One spectator was overheard asking another: "Why did he pick his ball up?" On the morning of the final, I heard two men talking. "Do both guys play two rounds?" one asked. "I'm not sure," came the reply. "I guess so."

The following sentence appeared in one of the most august newspapers in this country. "A definition of matchplay: if player A gets a 3 on the first hole and player B gets a 4, player B is one up after one hole." How have they explained what has been going on in the Ryder Cup?

These sort of vignettes are in danger of obscuring an important truth, however. This was an enjoyable tournament that has ended an unusual birth. It needs nourishing. It should be here to stay.



Maggert, left, celebrates with his caddie after holing the chip shot worth \$1 million

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## TELEVISION CHOICE

## Hollywood beckons

## Close Up LA Stories

BBC2, 9.30pm

Although James Nunn and Roder Parsons's film is scrupulous in emphasising that 85 per cent of Hollywood screenwriters cannot make a living from it, and even fewer ever have a film made of their work, it seems bound to encourage writer-movie viewers at least to consider adding to the tens of thousands of Britons who now seek the American Dream in Los Angeles. We see four examples of what they can expect: one overnight success, one consistent earner who is evidently on an upward curve, one rather cavalier chap who can take it or leave it and one absolute beginner with nothing more than an idea and a bank loan. Even struggling in obscurity looks good, and the glimpses of what success can bring are seductive, even though it appears (quite accurately), that getting anywhere in LA involves a very long drive. Where did I put that plot outline I came up with?

The Bill

ITV, 8pm

The first of a three-part special, written by Scott Cherry, centres on a series of assaults on pensioners. A gang of burglars are dosing the victims in petrol and threatening to torch them unless they hand over all their money and valuables, and are now carrying firearms. The aggressive DS Roulton is about to go on leave, but cancels that to take charge when he senses a possible arrest. His colleagues and juniors are less convinced that he has the right suspect, or sufficient evidence, but the subsequent raid puts a young informant in serious danger. Tonight's episode ends with PC Quinlan (Andrew Paul) in critical condition after he is set upon by a gang of youths.

## House Proud

BBC2, 8pm (except Scotland)

A new series, produced and directed by Robert Young, follows the progress over a year of people who want to build their own homes. Tonight we meet the Shrimptons, who have a large plot of



PC Quinlan (Andrew Paul) comes under attack in *The Bill* (ITV, 8pm)

land, a top-of-the-range timber-framed kit house and a well-respected small local building firm; Ian Tempest, who has three old Portakabins, the paddock of his mother's farm, and a long shot consultant; and the Spaniolds, who have quite a lot of money, part of somebody's garden and a dilapidated investment property under the road. Unlike tonight's *Close Up* film, this is unlikely to stir in viewers a longing to embark on the adventure of self-build.

Terry Patrick

Journeys Into the Outside with Jarvis Cocker

Channel 4, 11.10pm

In his third and final expedition into the world of "extraordinary" art created by ordinary people, the pop singer visits Mexico. Cocker travels to a remote mountainous area known as Xilitla, where in 1945 Edward James, a wealthy Englishman and friend of Salvador Dali, decided to build a surreal world of his own. What remains is a bizarre collection of buildings, gardens, fountains and statues which Cocker calls as a fine example of his Outsider Art. The singer then goes to Zurich and to the home of Bruno Weber. His gardens are filled with mosaic creatures including a pair of brightly decorated "snake bridges". Ian Hughes

## RADIO CHOICE

## Afternoon Play: People Come Here to Cry

Radio 4, 2.15pm

A new series, produced and directed by Robert Young, follows the progress over a year of people who want to build their own homes. Tonight we meet the Shrimptons, who have a large plot of

## Virus — The Unseen Enemy

Radio 4, 9pm

As a subject for a four-part radio series, the virus may not at first seem like a prime candidate. But it is surprising how interesting the little devils are. It is not so many years since the medical establishment felt optimistic about the chances of eliminating infectious diseases; altogether, yet, the virus remains the all-comers champion at killing people. So much so that much of medical opinion, as the first programme shows, now believes that viruses are here to stay, that they will never be conquered and that, in their most virulent forms, they will continue to shape our history in a way undreamt of by politicians. We discover tonight that whereas sneezing is a symptom to us, it is the route to survival for a virus.

Peter Barnard

## BBC WORLD SERVICE

6.30am Zoo Bell 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00pm Jo Whiley 2.00 Paul Radcliffe 4.00 Chris Moyles 5.45 Newbeat 6.00 Dave Pearce, Chart 8.00 The Evening Session. The latest music and session tracks 10.00 Digital Update 10.10 John Peel 12.00am The Breezeblock 2.00 Celia Warren 4.00 Scott Mills

## RADAR 2 (BBC)

6.30am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 12.00pm Juliette 2.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Alan Freeman: Their Greatest Hits 8.00 Nigel Ogden 9.00 To Mother With Love: The Story of the Tattoo 10.00 The Directors: North 10.30 Richard Allinson 12.00am Lynn Parsons 3.00 Alex Lester

## RADAR 5 (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 Breakfast 9.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00pm The Midday News 1.00 Rassau and Co 4.00 Drive 7.00 News Extra 7.20 The Tuesday Match. Action from the 1998 Commonwealth Games 8.00 The Saturday Match 9.00 The Sunday Match 10.00 Newsbeat 11.00 Newsdesk 12.00 Britas Today 10.45 Good Books 11.00 Newsdesk 11.30 Omnibus 12.00pm World News 12.05 Outlook 12.45 Sports Round-Up 1.00 NewsHour 2.00 Good Books 11.00 Newsdesk 12.00 Britas Today 12.45 Sports Round-Up 1.00 On Screen 2.00 World Today 3.30 Sports Round-Up 3.30 World Business Report 3.45 Sports Round-Up 4.00 World News 4.15 Britas Today 5.00 Newsdesk 5.30 Omnibus 7.00 World News 7.05 Discovery 7.30 Human Relations 7.45 The Shelf: Captain Corbin's Mandolin 8.00 Newsdesk 9.00 World News 9.05 World Business Report 9.30 Britas Today 9.30 Indian Live 10.00 Newsdesk 11.00 Britas Today 11.30 Britas Today 12.00 Britas Today 12.45 Sports Round-Up 1.00 Newsdesk 1.30 Discovery 12.55 My Country 1.30 Britas Today 1.30 On Screen 2.00 The World Today 2.30 Women Who Dated To Speak 3.00 The World Today 3.30 Sports Round-Up 3.30 World Business Report 3.45 Insight 4.00 The World Today

## CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. Soothing music and information updates 8.00 Henry Kelly, The Hall of Fame Hour and CD of the Week 12.00pm Luncheon Requests: Jane James, Ingrid, Iolanthe 1.00 The Classical Hour 2.00 Concerto 2.30 Britten's War Requiem 3.00 Britten's War Requiem 4.00 The Classical Hour 4.30 Britten's War Requiem 5.00 Concerto 5.30 Britten's War Requiem 6.00 Concerto 6.30 Newsnight: Sport, finance and news updates, with John Brunning 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classical sounds 9.00 Evening Concerto: Shostakovich: Suite No 2: Piano Concerto No 2: 3 Romances on Poems by Pushkin: Symphony No 15 in A major: A Spring Fantasy: Moscow 1910: Mann at Night: Music through the years 1.00 Concerto 2.00 Concerto: Wienawski (Violin Concerto No 1 in F sharp minor) (1) 3.00 Mark Grills: The Early Breakfast Show

## RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Petros Tsiaras 7.00 Masterworks: Verdi's *Overture: The Force of Destiny*; Paganini's *Le Streghe*; Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody*; Schubert's *Piano Sonata in C minor* 8.15 Petros Tsiaras 8.35 Maher (Ruckert-Lieder): 9.00 *Concerto 9.30 Britten's War Requiem* (2/2) 9.30 Britten-Pearce Ensemble with John Braine, piano. *Prokofiev: Overture on Hebrew Themes*; Martin (Piano Quintet); Johann Strauss, son, arr Schoenberg (Klezmer-Walzer) (1) 10.45 Night Waves A look at the long-awaited return of the film director Terrence Malick 11.30 Jazz Notes Alyn Shipton presents the more from John Coltrane's tribute to Stephane Grappelli 12.00am Composer of the Week: Copland (1) 1.00 Through the Night

## RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast 5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day 5.47 Farming Today 6.00 Today 6.30 Crime Stories 6.45 Evidence with Clive Anderson 6.50 Home Truths 6.55 BBC News 6.55 Weather 6.55 The Journal 6.55 (W) Daily Service 6.45 (W) Serial: Zarath 6.55 (W) Crime 7.00 The Archers 7.00 Pat refuses to stay put 7.45 The City of Bittern (1) 8.00 File on 4.45 in Tadzhik with Peter White 8.00 Virus: the Unseen Enemy 9.00 Unravelable

# A perfect mixture of bonds and betrayals

As Adrian Shergold's camera peers up at him through the keyhole of a manhole cover (look, by this stage of BBC2's *Births, Marriages and Deaths* we have not only grown used to cameras held at angles unknown to Euclid, we would be disappointed to be now denied them), Ray Winstone's Alan shares with his mate Graham a metaphysical conundrum not previously chewed upon by Aristotle.

"You know," he starts hesitantly, "you can't build sandcastles out of dry sand, and, well, you can out of wet sand? But how comes a sandcastle can still stand even though the sun dries it out?"

"Dunno," replies Phil Davis's Graham, a human cocktail made from equal measures of gormlessness, grief and rage. Graham has never swum effortlessly through life. He is now barely managing to keep his head above water, having just discovered that his wife — his

schoolgirl sweetheart — had had a baby at 15, given up for adoption. And yes, and the council has just sacked him from his job as a rat-catcher.

"It's friendship, mate. Yet know? Friendship. Don't mock it. I'm your friend. I can hold everything together, if you let me." But even Alan can't hold everything together. Fate has a way of slapping you in the face, whoever you and your friends are, and the joy of Tony Grounds's drama is the elegant, funny, tragic way it captures how quickly a life — any life — can unravel. When life trips you up, it doesn't feel as if you're falling off a kerb, it feels as if you're falling off Beachy Head. "I wish," stammers Graham, struggling to give some shape to his confusion.

"I was someone else. Anybody else. Look around, everything's so ... normal, and ... and I'm the only one in agony." Graham, still inarticulate with

rage, later slips back to his council flat to — one assumes — end his own life. His wife, Molly, and Alan track him down there. They find him standing in a wheelie-bin full of cement. "Why," shrieks Molly, "would you want to sell yourself in concrete?" Graham seems taken aback, like a man who — halfway through an errand — can't for the life of him remember what the errand was. "I dunno," he croaks, finally. "I just didn't know what else to do."

A man — who knows a bit about the building trade, having made his pile in patios — takes some solace from the fact that the proportions of sand to cement that Graham used meant that he could have been standing there till Christmas and the mixture still wouldn't have hardened; also from the fact that Graham had carefully surrounded the area with plastic sheets to

## REVIEW



Joe Joseph

avoid staining the carpets. The comedic undertow flavours but never overpowers the drama.

The plot? It's as carefully arranged as an ambassador's dining table. Twists, tensions, bonds and betrayals are deftly woven together so that their repercussions are rarely Tannoyed to us in advance. Even when we know that Alan will have to pay a price after confessing to his wife about

visiting prostitutes, we can't count on knowing where, or when, or in what circumstances he will have to pay it. When Terry (Mark Strong) decided last night to take up Alan's offer of a job, but then later obeyed his wife over Alan, you knew that sooner or later Terry would have to pay for his betrayal, but you would never be able to guess how.

And when Alan craves a red Corniche in the window of a Rolls-Royce showroom at the start of the episode, you might have imagined that he would end up buying it. But you would never have dreamt that in the final scene it would by Terry's wife's body smashing against the Corniche's windscreen as Alan accidentally hits her in his rush to the police station to sort out the arrest of his daughter for trespass. It's like playing chess the lady with a card-sharp and being caught napping, again and again. Staggeringly good.

But life is every bit as unpredictable as fiction. Dr Robert Ballard also had no inkling of the likely consequences of his discovery in 1985 of the wreck of *Titanic*. Having devoted his life to finding the most famous wreck in the world — yes, even more famous than Keith Richards — Ballard is now one of the loudest voices opposing the lifting of artefacts from the wreck.

In Channel 4's entertaining film *To The Ends of The Earth: The Battle for Titanic* — which seemed to lend support to Lew Grade's conclusion that when it comes to raising *Titanic* it can work out to be far less trouble to lower the Atlantic — Ballard likens it to "stripping the old lady of her jewellery in her grave".

Ballard clearly had no idea that his discovery would result in greed, obsession, Cold War intrigue, a cheezy TV special featuring some of the recovered relics

hosted by a tuxedoed Telly Savalas, courtroom battles, and Celine Dion. These in turn spawned their own unexpected *Titanic* consequences, including (a) more Britons choosing Celine Dion singing the theme tune to the movie, *Titanic*, as their preferred choice of music at their funerals; and (b) worldwide fascination in Kate Winslet's bodyweight.

Yet ... more unexpected consequences in *Tribe: The King of The Car Park*, a new BBC2 series about the way young people lead their lives: the main unexpected consequence being that those young boys and girls you see over in their cars might one day grow up into teenagers like Matthew and his pals, who think that spending your evenings in the McDonald's car park in Harlow tanning the tread off your dad's car tyres constitutes an enthralling social life. Even Graham's life has more going for it than this.

## BBC1

6.00am *Business Breakfast* (14734) 7.00 *BBC Breakfast News* (50453) 9.00 *Kirby* (T) (2984111) 9.45 *The Vanessa Show* (T) (7442173) 10.55 *News; Weather* (T) (3433937) 11.00 *Change That* (343314) 11.25 *Can't Cook, Won't Cook* (T) (3413173) 11.55 *News; Weather* (T) (7391111) 12.00pm *Call My Bluff* (21802) 12.30 *Wipeout* (497489) 12.55 *The Weather Show* (T) (5201889) 1.00 *One O'Clock News* (T) (53550) 1.30 *Regional News; Weather* (5093044) 1.40 *Neighbours* (T) (3507082) 2.05 *Ironside* Ed is confronted by a pair of aggressive LA cops (T) (5291647) 2.55 *Through the Keyhole* (T) (1197662) 3.25 *Children's BBC* *Playdate* (637444) 3.45 *Enchanted Lands: The Adventures of the Wishing Chair* (5823953) 3.55 *Hubub* (T) (22227) 4.10 *Chipmunks Go to the Movies* (7454588) 4.25 *The Really Wild Show* (3411647) 5.00 *Newround* (4176173) 5.10 *Grange Hill* (9863260) 5.35 *Neighbours* (T) (464918) 6.00 *Std. O'Clock News; Weather* (T) (935) 6.30 *Regional News Magazine* (47) 7.00 *Holiday Jill* Dando takes the trail in the American West (T) (7444) 7.30 *EastEnders* Frank takes Peggy for her biopsy (T) (31) 8.00 *Holby City* Muriel Kendrick finds an old colleague a bit of a handful as a patient (T) (4483) 9.00 *Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather* (T) (3463) 9.30 *Workers at War* Graduates are subjected to a weekend of grueling scrutiny at the IBM assessment centre. Last in series (T) (76040) 10.00 *Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult* (1994) Leslie Nielsen reprises his role as the inept cop Frank Drebin. Directed by Peter Segal (T) (8091821)



## BBC2

7.00am *Children's BBC Breakfast Show*: *Pingu* 7.05 *Teletubbies* 7.30 *Snores* 7.50 *Blue Peter* 8.20 *Taz-Mania* 8.40 *Polka Dot Shorts* 8.50 *Pingu* 9.00 *German Glob* 9.05 *Hello aus Berlin* 9.10 *Working It Out* 9.25 *Music Makers* 9.45 *Numberline* 10.00 *Teletubbies* 10.30 *Watch* 10.45 *Science Zone* 11.05 *Space Ark* 11.15 *Megamaths* 11.35 *Words and Pictures* 11.50 *D-Mag* 12.00pm *English Express* 12.30pm *Working Lunch* 1.00 *Cake* *Doke* (6833444) 1.10 *The House Detectives* 1.40 *Hart-Davis on History* 2.10 *Awash with Colour* 2.40 *News*; *Weather* (T) 2.45 *Westminster* (T) 3.25 *News; Weather* (T) 3.30 *The Village* (T) 3.35 *Kay's 25 Ready, Steady, Cook* (T) 4.35 *Ester* (T) 5.30 *The Day* (T) 5.45 *Esther* (T) 5.45 *Grange Hill* (9863260) 5.55 *Neighbours* (T) (464918) 6.00 *Std. O'Clock News; Weather* (T) (935) 6.30 *Regional News Magazine* (47) 7.00 *Holiday Jill* Dando takes the trail in the American West (T) (7444) 7.30 *EastEnders* Frank takes Peggy for her biopsy (T) (31) 8.00 *Holby City* Muriel Kendrick finds an old colleague a bit of a handful as a patient (T) (4483) 9.00 *Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather* (T) (3463) 9.30 *Workers at War* Graduates are subjected to a weekend of grueling scrutiny at the IBM assessment centre. Last in series (T) (76040) 10.00 *Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult* (1994) Leslie Nielsen reprises his role as the inept cop Frank Drebin. Directed by Peter Segal (T) (8091821)



Music news with Jayne Middlemiss and Jamie Theakston (710pm)

7.10 *The O Zone* P.J. Harvey talks to Jamie Theakston and Jayne Middlemiss meets the *Supernaturals* (T) (738918) 7.30 *From the Edge* User's guide to the new welfare reforms for the disabled (T) (73)

8.00 *House Proud* New series following the construction of self-built dream houses (1/4) (T) (4734) 8.30 *Your Money or Your Life* New series. Fi Glover presents the personal finance show with the human touch (T) (386) 9.00 *Home Front in the Garden* (T) (1005) 9.30 *CHOICE* Close Up the progress of four British screenwriters in Hollywood (T) (614665) 10.20 *Coming Clean: The Truth About Housework* Children's views of housework (T) (298111) 10.30 *Newswatch* (T) (175192) 11.10 *Seinfeld* Kramer designs a bra for men (T) (100918) 11.35 *The Larry Sanders Show* Larry's future looks bleak. Last in series (T) (861005) 11.55 *Weather* (40024) 12.00am *Despatch Box* (2203)

12.30pm *BBC Learning Zone: Open University: Linkage Mechanisms* 1.00 *The Programmers* 1.30 *The Arch Never Sleeps* 2.00 *Schools: Marsalis on Music/Talent* 2.00 *Shorts* 4.00 *Discovering Portuguese/Portuguese* 4.00 *Business and Training: Career Moves* 5.45 *Open University: Towards a Better Life* 6.10 *The Emergence of Greek Mathematics* 6.35 *The Location Problem*

10.40am *Driving Ambitions: A Season with Eddie Jordan* Profile of the motor racing entrepreneur (T) (281192)

11.40 *The Big Match* Preview of the European Cup quarter-finals (806802)

12.10am *WEST* *Pleasure Guide* Regional entertainment magazine (9239406)

12.10pm *WALES: Tales from the Darkside: Trick or Treat* (9233406)

12.45pm *The Haunted Fishtank* The irreverent TV review with Ed Hall (53319) 1.15 *Highlander MacLeod* meets a girl who is the double of the late Tessa (T) (901319) 2.30pm *Judge* (242932) 3.25 *Dead Men's Tales: Hanging by a Thread* by Joe Simpson. Drama about two young Britons who attempt to climb the awesome Bonatti pillar (T) (1261777) 3.55 *Football Extra* Football League highlights (T) (505695) 4.50pm *ITV Newscreen* (1542626)

10.30pm *HTV News and Weather* (T) (496685)

## HTV

5.30am *ITV Morning News* (67314) 6.00 *GMTV* (5155939) 9.25 *Thirsts* (T) (8387598) 10.30 *This Morning* (T) (4492192) 12.15pm *HTV News* (T) (4480734) 12.30pm *ITV Lunchtime News; Weather* (T) (58444) 1.00 *Shortland Street* The nurses suspect a plot (55918) 1.30 *Home and Away* Joel causes a scene (T) (80043) 2.00 *The Jerry Springer Show* Outrageous American talk show (T) (777260) 2.45 *Worst of Fortune* (T) (569666) 3.15 *ITV News Headlines* (T) (4123802) 4.00 *Shortland Street* The nurses suspect a plot (55918) 4.30 *Home and Away* Joel causes a scene (T) (80043) 5.00 *ITV News* (T) (4492192) 5.15 *ITV Lunchtime News; Weather* (T) (58444) 5.30 *ITV* *Mopstop's Shop* (4143665) 3.35 *Rosie and Jim* (6187531) 3.50 *The Wombles* (5474821) 4.00 *Rupert* (5680395) 4.25 *Mike and Angelo* (5887821) 4.50 *What's Next* (T) (5785951)

5.50am *ITV* *ITV News* (T) (4490734) 6.00 *Meridian* *News; Weather* (T) (480734) 6.20 *ITV* *ITV News* (T) (4490734) 6.30 *Meridian* *Home and Away* (T) (7235937) 6.45 *Meridian Tonight* (T) (63) 6.50-7.00 *Surprise Chefs* (T) (710) 7.30-8.00 *Wildlife SOS* (T) 10.30-10.40 *Meridian News; Weather* (T) (496865) 12.15am-12.45 *Plus* *Presse* (T) (54048) 5.00-5.30 *Freescreen* (T) (77332)

6.00pm *ITV* *ITV News* (T) (4490734) 6.20 *ITV* *ITV News* (T) (4490734) 6.30 *Meridian* *News; Weather* (T) (480734) 6.45 *Meridian* *Home and Away* (T) (7235937) 6.50 *Meridian Tonight* (T) (63) 6.50-7.00 *Surprise Chefs* (T) (710) 7.30-8.00 *Wildlife SOS* (T) 10.30-10.40 *Meridian News; Weather* (T) (496865) 12.15am-12.45 *Power Game* (T) (54048)

6.30pm *ITV* *ITV News* (T) (4490734) 6.45 *Meridian* *News; Weather* (T) (480734) 6.50 *Meridian* *Home and Away* (T) (7235937) 6.55 *Meridian* *Home and Away* (T) (7235937) 7.00-7.30 *Anglia News* (T) (5192873) 7.30-7.45 *Anglia News* (T) (5192873) 7.45-7.55 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.55-7.58 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.58-7.59 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.59-7.60 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.60-7.61 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.61-7.62 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.62-7.63 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.63-7.64 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.64-7.65 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.65-7.66 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.66-7.67 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.67-7.68 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.68-7.69 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.69-7.70 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.70-7.71 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.71-7.72 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.72-7.73 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.73-7.74 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.74-7.75 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.75-7.76 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.76-7.77 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.77-7.78 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.78-7.79 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.79-7.80 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.80-7.81 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.81-7.82 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.82-7.83 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.83-7.84 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.84-7.85 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.85-7.86 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192873) 7.86-7.87 *Anglia Weather* (T) (5192



## ATHLETICS 44

Why the millennium could make a world of difference to Lewis

# SPORT

TUESDAY MARCH 2 1999

## ROWING 50

Sharif faces up to a tall order in the Boat Race



Atherton and Thorpe among quartet given fortnight to prove fitness

## England set World Cup deadline

By RICHARD HORSON

ALTHOUGH England became the first of the Test-playing countries to announce their squad for the World Cup yesterday, the 15 players named by David Gravener may not be those who open the tournament against Sri Lanka on May 14. In effect, the party amounts to little more than a declaration of hope and intent.

Four of those chosen — Michael Atherton, Graham Thorpe, Neil Fairbrother and Ian Austin — will undergo fitness tests within the next fortnight and if any of the quartet fails what Gravener described as "a rigorous assessment", a replacement will be announced on March 15.

The selectors have decided

## SQUAD

A J Stewart (Surrey, captain), M A Atherton (Lancashire), I D Austin (Lancashire), R O B Crighton (Glamorgan), M A Badham (Kent), N H Paine (Middlesex), N Fairbrother (Warwickshire), A R C Paine (Middlesex), D Gough (Yorkshire), G A Hick (Worcestershire), A J Hollingshead (Surrey), N V Knight (Warwickshire), D J Morris (Lancashire), G P Smith (Surrey), V P White (Leicestershire).

to issue this early deadline even though the final 15 does not have to be lodged until March 31. There is still the provision to replace anybody injured during the Champions' Cup in Sharjah, a triangular tournament involving India, Pakistan and England, from April 8 to 16.

Gravener, the chairman of selectors, said: "On March 15 it will not be good enough to say: 'Oh well, they'll be alright in four or five weeks' time.' If there is any doubt at all, we cannot afford to fudge the issue because the competition is too important. The frequency with which Atherton's back has been flaring up was considered, but he will be tested over a number of days and we are confident he will come through it."

The squad leaving for Sharjah via Pakistan on March 29 contains ten players who featured in the recent one-day series in Australia, plus Atherton, Thorpe, Austin, Andrew Flintoff and Angus Fraser. Vince Wells will act as the reserve wicketkeeper to Alec Stewart, the captain. Those who can consider themselves



Gravener, the chairman of selectors, said that no risks would be taken with players' fitness when he announced the squad yesterday. Photograph: Laurence Griffiths/Allsport

unlucky to have been omitted are Nasser Hussain and Dean Headley. Both were prominent in Australia, as Gravener telephoned Hussain, as well as Mark Alleyne and Mark Ramprakash, to explain the decision yesterday morning. The omission of Ashley Giles means that Graham Hick will support Robert Croft in the spinner's role.

Gravener said that Atherton's back problem is different from the one that troubled him in Australia. As for Thorpe, he began a programme of rehabilitation specifically geared towards the World Cup when he left the tour before the third Test match in Adelaide.

With the exception of Hick, the batting left much to be desired in the subsequent one-day games. Fairbrother has become increasingly prone to hamstring problems while Austin has undergone a knee operation.

The white ball used for the tournament is notorious for swinging and seaming more than the red variety and Atherton's ability to work singles provides an alternative to batsmen who prefer to hit through the line. The latter group will struggle on overcast mornings. Equally, Fraser and Austin have been chosen to exploit these conditions.

Gravener said: "There were areas of our batting that caused concern in Australia. Atherton's record in this coun-

try is impressive and Thorpe's absence from the middle order has been a big loss in five-day and one-day cricket. To go back to... two of our most experienced players makes sense."

Compared with the well-

drilled athleticism of Australia and South Africa, the squad does not inspire great confidence in the field, even with everybody fully fit. Gravener said, not entirely convincingly, that "weaknesses you may perceive will not be weaknesses".

Compared with the well-

### Flintoff makes most of slim tour chance

FIGURES have not always been kind to Andrew Flintoff. When he last played for England, in the final Test match against South Africa at Headingley, he failed to score a run or take a wicket (Thierry Petropoulos writes).

Of greater concern was the condition of his lower back, which, with the excess weight he was carrying, had restricted his bowling. Flintoff probably benefited from having been omitted from the winter Test and one-day tour parties

to Australia, being sent instead to Zimbabwe and South Africa with the A team. He has been the outstanding batsman on the tour, averaging 78 in first-class matches, and the most effective one-day bowler.

"I lost about 25 before coming on tour," he said. "I did a lot of training and got a lot fitter. It seems to have paid off. Now I'm getting back into it (bowling) again; it's given me a tremendous boost. Hopefully, I can bring it up to what it was before."

Competition rules on the re-

placement of players come into force on May 2. After that date, a tournament panel of three doctors must assess any injury before approving a change, and the unfit player will not be allowed to return to the squad. England have been led to believe that they can replace somebody even if the injury is a recurrence of an old problem. In other words, Atherton could still be withdrawn during the tournament if his back flares up again, however many times he passes beforehand.

Cork back in full, page 49  
Slater left out, page 49

Ronaldo out, page 48

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No 1654

**ACROSS**  
1 Getting one's way in tiny steps (6,7)  
8 Back of skull (7)  
9 Strange; non-citizen (5)  
10 Profilic (3)  
11 Creator, not supreme, god (8)  
13 Discined (6)  
14 Senseless destroyer (6)  
17 Charming, captivating (8)  
19 Saucierous cup one swindled (6)  
21 Ballade final stanza (5)  
22 Approve; sign back of cheque (7)  
24 Sli down at last (3,4,2)

**DOWN**  
1 Pleasure craft: Kern musical (4,4)  
2 A permit (7)  
3 Geog. plan (3)  
4 Jap. matting (6)  
5 Liquid solidify (9)  
6 Sugary cake topping (5)  
7 Slowly go down (4)  
11 Abandonment (9)  
12 Pit of mine waste (4,4)  
15 Blameworthy conduct (7)  
16 Preoccupy (6)  
18 Distressed turf (5)  
20 Cannabis plant for rope (4)  
23 One Welsh, two Scot. rivers (3)

**SOLUTION TO NO 1653**  
ACROSS: 8 Nairobi 9 Mensa 10 Trouseau 11 Owe 12 Logic 14 Testify 15 Pretend 17 Bambi 19 Tun 20 Teddy bear 22 Corfe 23 Confin  
DOWN: 1 Instil 2 Ciao 3 Horse chestnut 4 Divert 5 Impulse buying 6 Encouraged 7 Napery 13 Greenery 15 Putsch 16 Deduce 18 Israel 21 Exit

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had much more to say on the subject. The Celtic chairman said that he felt vindicated, but added: "This should never have taken three years. It should have been resolved at the time."

Cadete was purchased in February 1996 from Sporting Lisbon to augment Celtic's push for the Scottish Premier League title, yet, despite the player's international transfer clearance (ITC) being received by the SFA from the Portuguese FA on March 7, 1996, Cadete was still not registered in time to face Rangers in a league match on March 17, instead of drawing 1-1.

John McBeth, the vice-president of the SFA, took barely a minute to read the statement, saying the case raised by Celtic "has been settled by the parties prior to completion of arbitration". The settlement is in favour of Celtic.

Not surprisingly, McCann

Celtic lost that match 2-1 and pursued it as the basis of their case against the SFA, which runs the competition.

However, had Cadete

who scored five goals in six games when he was finally registered for the remainder of 1995-96 season and 33 goals the next season — not been prevented from playing, he may have had an influence on the destination of the title, too.

Celtic lost the league to Rangers by four points, a margin that would have been markedly reduced had they defeated their rivals in a league match on March 17, instead of drawing 1-1.

Ferry also issued a statement yesterday, saying he was "co-operating with my employers in an additional investigation into issues raised by the dispute". There was no public apology from the SFA. It had undertaken that task earlier in the day, with a letter to Celtic from McBeth, stating that "as a consequence of failures by the chief executive... the registration had not progressed as it ought. The SFA acknowledges that had registration been given, the player [Cadete] would have been available to play against Rangers."



Ferry: investigation



McCann: vindicated